

10230 225

INTRODUCTION
TO THE
KNOWLEDGE
OF
GERMANY.



INTRODUCTION
TO THE
KNOWLEDGE
OF
GERMANY.

Containing Enquiries into the Disposition and Manners, peculiar Habits and Customs, of the distinct Classes of Society. Particularities and Anecdotes of their divers Courts, and remarkable Personages. A View of their Literature and Learning, Improvements in Arts and Sciences, religious Opinions and singular Notions, different Governments, Politics, and Revolutions. With a Variety of other Researches, tending to afford a complete Idea of that Country and its Inhabitants, during the latter Ages, and at the present Time.

LONDON:

Printed for T. HOOKHAM, New Bond Street.

M.DCC.LXXXIX.



INTRODUCTION
TO THE
KNOWLEDGE
OF
GERMANY.

Containing Enquiries into the Disposition and Manners, peculiar Habits and Customs, of the distinct Classes of Society. Particularities and Anecdotes of their divers Courts, and remarkable Personages. A View of their Literature and Learning, Improvements in Arts and Sciences, religious Opinions and singular Notions, different Governments, Politics, and Revolutions. With a Variety of other Researches, tending to afford a complete Idea of that Country and its Inhabitants, during the latter Ages, and at the present Time.

LONDON:

Printed for T. HOOKHAM, New Bond Street.

M.DCC.LXXXIX.



CONTENTS.

CHAP. I. Page 1.

OPINIONS of Tacitus, Bouhours, and Dacier, concerning the Capacity of the Germans, and the Northern People of Europe—The Genius and Language of the Germans greatly improved at this Day—Learning highly respected in Germany—Influence of the clergy in Germany, and all Christendom during the middle Ages—Prosperous State of Germany before the civil Wars in the last Century.

CHAP. II. Page 21.

Affertions of the French, the Spaniards, and the Italians, concerning the Germans—General Temper and Disposition of the Germans—Their Frankness and Hospitality—Social Intercourse among their Princes—Ambitious Character of the Sovereigns in Germany—Its ruinous Consequences—Ostentatiousness of the German Courts—Instances of its pernicious Effects—The German Princes formerly much addicted to Literature.

CHAP. III. Page 41.

Germany, a Country very favourable to Men of active and aspiring Dispositions—The polite Arts remarkably patronised by many of the German Princes

Princes—Their independent Spirit—Indulgence in their various Humours—Addiction of the Germans to hard drinking—Strictures on some of the German Courts—On Frederic Augustus of Saxony.

C H A P. IV. Page 57.

Of the Saxons—Their Genius, Courage, and other useful and agreeable Qualifications—Beauty and Engagingness of the Saxon Women—Austrian Women—Austrian Men—Of the House of Austria.

C H A P. V. Page 85.

Causes of the Revolutions in Germany—Imperial and free Cities—Their Opulence—Wealth and Pride of their Merchants and chief Citizens—Benefits accruing to Germany from the Emigration of the French Protestants, particularly to the Country of Bradenburgh.

C H A P. VI. Page 107.

Moderation of the Germans in religious Matters—Differences among the Protestants—Of Luther—Of the ecclesiastical Princes of Germany—Their Riches, Conduct, and Character—Of the Secular Princes in Germany—Their Bravery and military Virtues—General Ideas of their Power, and Methods of governing—Of the Sovereigns of the House of Brandenburgh.

C H A P.

CONTENTS.

ii

CHAP. VII. Page 139.

Causes of Emigration in Germany—Propensity of the Germans of all ranks, to quit their Country in Search of better Fortune—Their Success in various Countries, through their Industry, Abilities, and Merit—Resolution, Perseverance, and Dexterity of the Germans, in their Enterprises—Peculiarly qualified to rise in the World—Narrow Circumstances of most of the German Gentlemen—Family Pride of the German Nobility—Their Contempt of the mercantile and trading Classes—Capriciousness of some German Princes—Evil Effects of excessive Respect for the Great—Eagerness of the Germans to be employed in the Courts of their Princes—Contrasted with the French and the English in this Particular.

CHAP. VIII. Page 169.

Of the lower Classes in Germany—Of some German Customs—German Literati—State of Arts, Learning, and Literature, in Germany—Ridiculous Opinions lately current among the Germans—Superstitious Notions and Practices still prevalent in many Parts of Germany—Credulous Disposition of the Germans—Odd Usages in some Places of Germany.

CHAP. IX. Page 201,

Germany, a Country full of Prejudices—Instances of many—Arrogance of the Peasantry in some Parts—Their excessive Servility and Abjectness in most

most others—Harsh Treatment of them by their Masters—Submissiveness of the Germans to the Will and Pleasure of their Sovereigns—Remarkable Humour of a German Prince—Subserviency and Passiveness of Behaviour in the Germans, much against their natural Inclination.

C H A P. X. Page 197.

Constancy of the Germans in adhering to their primitive Professions—Good Effects resulting from it—Different Opinions entertained of the Germans, and of the French, by the People of Europe—General Probity and Candour of the Germans—Their Laboriousness and Economy—Happy Consequences of these Qualities—Concluding Reflections.



INTRO-

INTRODUCTION
TO THE
KNOWLEDGE
OF
GERMANY.

CHAP. I.

Opinions of Tacitus, Bouhours, and Dacier, concerning the Capacity of the Germans, and the Northern People of Europe—The Genius and Language of the Germans greatly improved at this Day—Learning highly respected in Germany—Influence of the Clergy in Germany, and all Christendom during the middle Ages—Prosperous State of Germany before the civil Wars in the last Century.

THE Germans are a people whose character deserves as much attention and study as that of any nation whatsoever.

B Though

Though less renowned hitherto for brilliancy of genius and parts than some of their southern neighbours, yet they have an ample stock of those abilities that are necessary and essential in the more important and solid concerns of life, and political society.

Tacitus, in his account of their ancestors, seems to undervalue their intellectual merit; but this was at a time when they were absolute strangers to all manner of polite civilisation, and deserved the appellation of barbarians almost in its fullest meaning. Yet even in this rude state of unpolished nature, they discovered a vein of judgement and good sense in many of their transactions, both among themselves and with others, especially the Romans, that fully shewed their native endowments wanted only cultivation to

shine with distinguished lustre. With all their deficiencies, they were still a match for that ambitious people ; and remain the most illustrious proof, in history, that firmness of mind, and perseverance in struggling against difficulties, are often alone sufficient to enable a nation to resist those who are possessed of superior advantages and improvements.

A French writer, Bouhours, has thought proper to deny them admittance in the province of wit. In this he is seconded by another of his countrymen, Dacier, who, in the preface to his translation of Horace, gives the like exclusion to all the nations lying north of France, the English themselves not excepted. Among these particularly he singles out Dryden as an object of his censure, and consequently as a proof of the justness of his severity.

This shews how ignorant the French were in his time, of the merit of the English in the various branches of polite literature, and how little they were acquainted with the many eminent writers England had then produced. They allowed us, indeed, to excel in mathematics and natural philosophy; but this was, in their idea, the utmost of our pretensions; and they held us, together with the other people of the northern parts of Europe, to be very little calculated for works of imagination and fancy.

But the variety of ingenious productions that appeared in Germany, long before the days of these two French authors, make it evident, that Bouhours was no better acquainted with the merit of the Germans, than Dacier with that of the English. The obvious impertinence of their several criticisms,

cisms, serves only to expose their own ignorance of the subjects they so presumptuously took upon them to be judges of. Bouhours was, in fact, little more than a mere phraseologist, at most a philologist in his own language ; and Dacier should have confined himself to the task of commenting and translating ; for the latter of which, however, he was by no means so eminently qualified as several others of his countrymen.

When uninformed individuals venture to obtrude on the public their rash, unfounded decisions on the capacity and talents of whole nations, they ought, in justice to society, to be laid before the world in their genuine colours, lest the celebrity of a name, often obtained with very little of solid desert, should impose on the credulous multitude. Mankind is gene-

rally too ready to accept of information, without enquiring into the character of those from whom they receive it. How frequently does it happen that persons are well conversant in those branches which they have made the principal business of their lives, and on which, of course, their reputation may be reasonably founded, and yet are liable to betray the most ignominious barrenness of understanding, and deficiency of knowledge, when they presume to step out of that long-beaten track to which their faculties have been wholly confined? By constant use and habit the mind may become so entirely fashioned to one peculiar object, as to lose all aptitude to treat of other matters with discernment and propriety.

The truth is, that whatever ignorance, or levity, may have suggested, the Germans,

mans, for several ages, and especially since the extinction of their civil feuds a century ago, have made a very conspicuous figure in the republic of letters: of late years they have considerably improved their own tongue; which is bold, manly, and copious. In pastoral and epic poetry, they have produced compositions of prime merit. The names of a Brocks, a Kleist, a Klopstock, and a Gessner, are abundantly sufficient, without adducing any others, to rescue them from an imputation of a defect of genius. The translation of many of their works into the languages of the principal nations in Europe, and the applause with which they are universally read, are incontestable proofs of their superior excellence.

The force and energy of the German compositions in prose is allowed by all who

have perused them. The emphatical dictation of their prayers and sermons is particularly remarkable. This is a circumstance which even some Frenchmen of note, well conversant in the German language, have been impartial enough to acknowledge. What was still more, they have even confess that the stile and expressions of the French were not equal in point of weight and sublimity to those of the German.

In sonnets, madrigals, epigrams, and other minute parts of poetry, the Germans have not indeed been hitherto very productive; but this they need not lament, when it is reflected how little such performances contribute to a great reputation.

Neither have they shone in the drama with that splendour which they might

have done, had they exerted themselves to bring it to that degree of perfection, of which it is evidently susceptible in their language. This is owing to the slight encouragement bestowed upon German originals during a considerable period, and to the decided preference given to the translations of the French dramatic writers. 'Tis but of late years the Germans, whose disposition and taste is more congenial to that of the English, than of the French, have adopted the manners and spirit of the former on their stage. They now display a greater relish for the activity and boldness of plan, and the pathetic sublimity, as well as the affecting simplicity of Shakespeare, than for the regularity and correctness of method observed on the French theatre: elegance of stile, and beauty of sentiments, constitute the chief and often the sole merit of the greatest masters

of

of the French drama, who thus, in contradiction to an essential rule, have substituted mere dialogue in the place of action.

No European nation has altogether paid a more marked attention and respect to learning than the Germans.

Soon after the establishment of the western empire, in the person of Charlemain, Germany, through its perpetual intercourse with Italy, received the benefit of every denomination of science and literature, then current in that only spot of their cultivation during those barbarous times.

Thus the pretensions of the successors of that great conqueror to the sovereignty of Rome, however they involved the Italians and Germans in continual disputes and hostilities, proved in the mean time of singular

singular efficacy, in civilising and in polishing the latter.

So great, indeed, became their veneration for learning, and its professors, that they alone were thought worthy of directing the affairs of state, as well as of presiding over the concerns of religion, and guiding the understandings of mankind.

The ecclesiastical order possessing exclusively the learning then extant, was in consequence reputed the depository of every species of wisdom ; and was consulted as an oracle, of which the decisions were sacred and infallible.

Well did the members of that powerful body of men understand how to turn to the best account the reverence and authority they derived from their station. The influence

fluence which they bore in all matters, civil as well as spiritual, was prodigious, and almost incredible at the present time, when we compare it to the surprising diminution it has undergone, and the continual decrease it is daily experiencing in every part of the world.

Nor was Germany, indeed, the only theatre of ecclesiastical power. All Christendom was equally subjected to it in these unenlightened ages, insomuch, that an almost implicit obedience to churchmen became an avowed and established rule; from which it was in a manner criminal to depart, and which few men, however daring, had the courage to set at defiance. In all undertakings of any importance, their advice was scrupulously followed, and every failure, through the superstitious turn of

the

the times, was attributed to the neglecting to consult them.

Thus, among many other instances, when William the Conqueror was meditating his expedition against England, he thought it necessary to secure the approbation of the most celebrated clergymen in Europe, and especially of the court of Rome. He obtained from the Pope a consecrated banner ; a present which, however trifling it may now appear, was held by the Normans in as great respect as the labrum of the Roman emperors by their legions. What was more to William's purpose, it was considered by his whole army as an unanswerable proof of the justice of his cause, and as an infallible earnest of victory.

When the Crusades were first set on foot,

foot, the like functions were used to authorise them. All Christendom resounded with the zealous exhortations of the clergy of all orders and denominations, promising success in this world, and everlasting felicity in the next, to all who contributed by their purse, or their persons, to so pious and meritorious an enterprise.

In the civilisation and settlement of Germany, ecclesiastical policy had evidently the principal, and frequently the sole management. Hence that vast country was filled with colonies of Monks and Friars, and the civil government rendered subordinate to that of the church in every place, where the least pretence was afforded to such encroachments. A system which, notwithstanding the introduction of Protestantism, and the great alterations that have ensued from that cause, yet strongly maintains

maintains its ground. Though invaded in many considerable parts, still, like a tree, whose trunk and capital branches remain untouched, it bids fair to last and flourish, and seems not apprehensive of long seeing the axe laid to its root.

The duration of such an extraordinary and complex a constitution as that of Germany, is entirely owing to the placid temper of the natives. They are a race of mortals peculiarly gifted with that moderation and equanimity which can rest satisfied with any plan that is found any ways tolerable. This accounts for their long and pacific compliance with their own forms of government, however troublesome and inconvenient in a variety of respects. In the midst of the many revolutions that have attended the neighbouring states and kingdoms, they have discovered

no propensity to submit to experiments of such a nature, lest a change might happen for the worse.

Though they have deviated in some measure from this maxim in religious matters, which, however, is not surprising, when the motives, the times, and the actors, are duly considered, yet the spirit of those institutions that took place at the primitive formation of the Germanic body still subsists, and uniformly presides in all affairs of moment.

In the days of the emperor Maximilian, about the beginning of the sixteenth century, learning, arts, and commerce, flourished in Germany more than any where in Europe, excepting Italy, from whence they were communicated. In the course of this and the following age, particularly

at that period which preceded the breaking out of the thirty-years civil war, Germany had attained to so remarkable a degree of happiness and splendour, that the celebrated Latin geographer, Cluverius, who wrote about this time, begins his account of it, by asserting as a known, indisputable fact, that from the greatness and magnificence of its many cities, and the high cultivation of all the arts, it was a country comparable to Italy, and preferable to any other in Europe.

This state of prosperity was owing to the uncommon care that had been unremittingly bestowed on that extensive region by its inhabitants, through a long course of ages; during which it underwent, by means of their toil and assiduity, a transformation truly surprising, when we look back to the descriptions left us by the

Roman authors. They uniformly represent it as the seat of wretchedness and desolation, covered with woods, drowned in marshes, overspread with mountains, horrid to sight, and impassable to travellers.

The domestic felicity of the Germans suffered, indeed, some interruption from the disputes, on account of religion that happened in the reign of Charles the Fifth. But the wisdom of that great prince soon dictated to him the necessity of putting an end to them. The pacification by which liberty of conscience was established in the empire, secured it from those scenes of horror which were then raging through so many other parts of Europe.

This happy liberty prevailed, with little molestation, till the reign of Ferdinand the Second, whose bigotry and ambition equally contri-

contributed to plunge his country into that misery and desolation, from which such a number of years and so many favourable events were necessary to effect a recovery.

During the course of that terrible war, which lasted thirty years, the fairest provinces of Germany were laid waste alternately by friend and foe ; the most beautiful edifices were destroyed ; the richest towns and cities plundered, burned, and levelled to the ground ; and the most horrible massacres committed, without the least mercy shewn on either side.

These dreadful disorders continued until the peace of Westphaly ; which is in Germany, like the revolution in England, the grand epocha from whence they date the final settlement of their constitution.

Since that auspicious event, they have laboured successfully in repairing the disasters of their country, in restoring it to its former situation, and introducing the improvements of other nations.

CHAP.

C H A P. II.

Assertions of the French, the Spaniards, and the Italians, concerning the Germans — General Temper and Disposition of the Germans — Their Frankness and Hospitality — Social Intercourse among their Princes — Ambitious Character of the Sovereigns in Germany — Its ruinous Consequences — Ostentatiousness of the German Courts — Instances of its pernicious Effects — The German Princes formerly much addicted to Literature.

THE French, who are of all people the most arrogant and presumptuous in judging of other nations, have thought proper to assert, that the Germans are slow of apprehension, and heavy in their proceedings.

Herein they are abetted by the Italians

and Spaniards. An embassador from the court of Madrid to that of Vienna complained in his dispatches, that he had to deal with a wrong-headed people, sluggish in their conceptions, and of narrow minds ; adding by way of illustration, that their understandings were like the horns of the goats in his country, little, hard, and crooked. Strictures of the like nature have not unfrequently been made by the natives of Italy on similar occurrences.

It may very justly be answered in behalf of the Germans, that they are usually very solicitous thoroughly to comprehend what they go about, and more intent to secure success by labour and diligence, than willing to risque it by hurry and precipitation. This, indeed, is the natural and necessary result of their phlegmatic disposition ; a state of mind that holds the passions in a

happy subjection to reason and reflection, by substituting coolness and serenity of judgement in the room of impetuosity and fire of imagination ; the suppression of these making way for that even temperature of the soul which enjoys its various sensations with calmness, and is not easily moved from its poize.

This produces a habit of deliberation, which renders the Germans less liable to be actuated by violence and temerity in their resolutions, than many of those who boast so highly of the superiority of their talents. Hence, among many other beneficial consequences, proceeds that moderation in their public councils, which restrains religious zeal within stricter bounds than in most other countries in Christendom, and prevents the Protestants and

Romanists from holding each other in so much hatred and abhorrence as they unhappily do in other parts.

Difference of communion, however it might engender enmity and feuds at its first commencement, does not seem to have taken such profound root in Germany as elsewhere: its rage was fortunately soon spent in comparison of its duration among other European nations. It may even, on due consideration, be said, that most of their civil wars, on religious pretences, were much less prompted by inconsiderate zeal than political motives. This plainly appeared at the treaty which terminated their domestic troubles in the last century, by the facility with which all spiritual matters were mutually accommodated.

But whatever the diversity of opinions
may

may be touching the intellectual endowments of the Germans ; to their far greater honour, their moral qualities have never been called in question. Their benevolence, friendliness, and hospitality, are well known, and experienced by all travellers of any character, and their candour and sincerity have long been proverbial. Their manners are plain, simple, and little altered from what they were ages ago. If they have adopted many foreign usages, they have had an eye to propriety in their imitation. They have not, for instance, been the servile copiers of the French in their needless and affected refinements, nor of the Italians in their false notions of grandeur. Their tables have an ample sufficiency without endless niceties, and their ways of living are generous without being profuse. Though lovers of state, yet their princes indulge in a friendly and frequent inter-

intercourse ; and never permit an ill-grounded pride to obstruct the pleasures of good fellowship and agreeable society. Very different herein from the princes of Italy ; among whom an approximation is almost impracticable, from the preposterous difficulties they find in adjusting the ceremonial to be observed between them.

This is the more remarkable, as the German princes and grandes are of all people the most infatuated with their birth, tenacious of the prerogatives annexed to it, and desirous of augmenting them by an accession of titulary honours.

Some of their principal sovereigns have carried these ambitious prepossessions so far as never to rest, until by an equivalence of nominal dignity they had raised themselves to the level of those, of whose superiority in

in point of rank they could not bear the most trifling indication. Thus Frederic, the first King of Prussia, expended immense sums to obtain that appellation ; the want of which had obliged him to submit to the refusal of an armed chair in his interview at the Hague with our William the Third.

Inspired with the same high-mindedness, the house of Saxony ruined itself for the empty name of King of Poland. The house of Bavaria lately did the same for that of Emperor.

An equal spirit animates them in the prosecution of courtly splendour. Hence, not to be wanting in any of those appendages of brilliancy that were formerly known only in the capital courts of Europe, orders of knighthood have been instituted

stituted with the most costly solemnities. Brandenburgh devised the black, and Saxony the white eagle, at a time when the first of these houses was but just emerging from mediocrity, and the second in a tottering condition. They were, however, of sufficient dignity to warrant such institutions; but they were speedily imitated by others far inferior in every respect. Sundry petty princes of the empire indulged their fancies in foundations of the same kind. They saw how greatly their respective subjects were delighted with these badges of imaginary distinction; and were determined to gratify them, as they could do it at so cheap a rate.

From these causes Germany, beyond all countries, abounds in stars and ribbands; the wearers of which industriously seize every

every opportunity to display them with eclat.

The above-mentioned Frederic of Prussia was a hero in these feats. He spent the greatest part of his reign in a round of magnificence, hardly inferior to that of Lewis the Fourteenth of France, his contemporary, whom he punctilioſly emulated in all the departments of courtly grandeur. His guards and retinue were clad, his palaces furnished, and his household maintained, with more cost and sumptuousness than those of any monarch, that of France alone excepted. Happily, however, for his people, he imitated him at the same time in the more laudable parts of his character, by encouraging the polite arts, and establishing schools and academies for their cultivation, and by providing

ing liberally for the education of young gentlemen.

Before the two last general wars had affected the sources of their respective revenues, this rage for splendour reigned alike in all the German courts; from those of which the heads are qualified with the title of majesty, to those who have assumed the style of highness; the lowest that is used to any sovereign of the least consequence, in this region of kings and princes.

Even at this day of reformation and œconomy among some of the greatest powers in Europe, the propensity to glare and shew still maintains its ground among many of the German princes; as if they thought pre-eminence and power incomplete without such external trappings.

The

The minute business and forms of a court, which in England and France are looked upon as rather tedious and fulsome, are, on the contrary, a pleasing occupation in Germany. Here every petty sovereign seems charmed with the solicitude and exactness with which his numerous attendants perform their various parts in the little sphere both he and they have to act in.

Small as it may be, due care, however, is usually taken there should not be the least omission of any of those official personages exhibited on the royal stages of the greatest European courts, and which, in some measure, are considered as the *dramatis personæ* of government, that amuse the shallow-minded spectators, and contribute to keep up the farce and pedantry of state.

Neither

Neither are they less ingenious in contriving those species of solemnities that consist of fights and pageantry: of these there is a greater variety in Germany than in all the rest of Europe; much owing, doubtless, to that irresistible fondness for the display of their rank and quality, which the regulations attending these pompous festivals always afford the principal actors in them ample room to indulge in.

But as few things of this nature, however censurable, are utterly devoid of all advantage, it must be acknowledged, that this universal turn for shewy pleasures and diversions, which prevails in the German courts, has been productive of a spirit of affability and politeness that renders them highly agreeable to strangers and visitors. The friendly treatment of these, if their profession and circumstances be gentlemanly

manly and decent, exceeds any thing of the kind in all Europe, and reflects the more honour on the German princes and nobles, as they are accused, not without reason, of valuing themselves on account of their birth and condition beyond the nobility of all other nations.

This thirst of pre-eminence accompanies them wherever they go. It often engages such of them as are possessed of riches, and decorated with their orders of knighthood, to solicit employments that may lead them into the different courts of Europe, where they are fond of parading on political pretexts, when they can exhibit themselves as persons of importance.

No small tincture of this vain glory is perceptible in several of their petty sovereigns, who not seldom indulge a needless

D and

and expensive curiosity in travelling to scarce any other obvious purpose, and probably with no other intent, than to make an empty display of their equipage and retinue.

Ostentatious grandeur has, indeed, at all times been the favourite object, and no less fatal pursuit, to which numbers of the German potentates, if such a term be applicable to many of them, dedicate no small a portion of their time, and no inconsiderable a share of their revenues, while in peace; nor even, when engaged in war, has necessity been able to prevail upon them to alter their conduct. Some have rather chosen to diminish the number of their troops than renounce these destructive vanities, however detrimental to their dearest interests.

The first king of Prussia was a remarkable proof of this infatuation. Instead of employing his large revenues in putting himself in a posture of defence, on the approach of Charles the Twelfth of Sweden, whose violent measures he had too much reason to apprehend, he still continued his usual course of costly and needless pompousness, thereby exposing himself to the insults and haughty treatment of that dangerous neighbour, on whose rapid successes common prudence might have taught him to keep a watchful eye.

The ruin of his neighbour, Frederic Augustus, Elector of Saxony, had partly been effected by the indiscriminate profusion with which that otherwise noble-minded prince had scattered his treasures among the Polish grandees, with a view to win them over to his interest and measures.

This fatal waste of his money laid him open to the attacks of the Swedish monarch, and taught him, though too late, the imprudence of exercising ill-bestowed generosity, and rioting in superfluous magnificence.

There was a time when science and literature flourished uncommonly among the princes of Germany, more, indeed, than among persons of the same rank in any other country of Christendom. This was during the period which lasted from the commencement of the reformation till their civil wars in the last century. As learning became the mode among the great, it met, of course, with the highest encouragements and rewards. The prime ministers of those days were generally men of eminent parts; and both they and their masters were equally solicitous to facilitate and

promote the advancement of letters and knowledge. Hence the foundation of so many colleges and public schools, professorships and libraries, in the Protestant districts especially. The spoils of these latter, particularly of the famous one at Heidelberg, were deemed presents worthy of the see of Rome itself; when, through the chances of war, they fell into the hands of the Romish party.

But the dreadful war that continued thirty years in Germany, unfortunately extinguished this ardour for learning. The study of military knowledge took place of the application to polite arts. Men were obliged, in their own defence, to lay by all other considerations, but those that related to the turbulent and sanguinary times in which they were placed.

Since that fatal æra a different spirit has prevailed. An addiction to literature has been no longer the ruling passion of the German princes. Though not totally deficient in erudition, they have entirely remitted from that warmth in the pursuit of it, for which their predecessors were so much distinguished.

It is necessary, however, to except from these strictures several whose laudable attachment to literary occupations, and liberal pursuits, deserves to be recorded. Among these was the celebrated Ulric Duke of Wolfenbuttel, at the beginning of this century, who composed a number of ingenious pieces in his native language, written in a most elegant and masterly stile. Such was also a late Margrave of Baden, whose hours of relaxation were spent in the attainment of almost every branch of knowledge

ledge conducive to public utility. But to omit many other instances, one may be cited which eclipses every comparison; that of the late king of Prussia, a monarch whose transcendent abilities, both in war and in peace, were long an object no less of terror and envy than of universal admiration, and to whose merits, therefore, complete justice will be done only by posterity.

10 2

CHARLES DAVY

C H A P. III.

Germany, a Country very favourable to Men of active and aspiring Dispositions — The polite Arts remarkably patronised by many of the German Princes — Their independent Spirit — Indulgence in their various Humours — Addiction of the Germans to hard drinking — Strictures on some of the German Courts — On Frederic Augustus of Saxony.

NOTWITHSTANDING the erroneous notions of several among the German princes in some parts of their conduct, and those failures in their judgement of things, of which all men have a share, it must be allowed that Germany is the largest and most advantageous field in Europe for an active genius to move in.

The

The number of courts and states wherein employment is to be found, and men of capacity are wanted, opens a noble and spacious prospect to an enterprising spirit, conscious of its abilities, and of the probability of succeeding with perseverance and application.

As each of these courts places itself on a level of emulation with every other, whoever can forward their respective views is sure of a welcome. As, according to the predominant schemes of those who govern, and the diversity of their pursuits and designs, an adequate proportion of talents, equal to the execution of them, is indispensably required, they who possess them must necessarily be procured.

Hence Germany abounds with persons of excellence in those accomplishments that qualify

qualify a man for civil government, or military command; or that enable him to acquit himself with dexterity of those commissions which the multiplicity of emergencies incident to a sovereign court, generally immersed in political intrigues, is hourly giving birth to.

So thoroughly do the resolute and adventuring individuals in the European world seem persuaded of this, that no few of them have at all times considered Germany as a very proper and desirable theatre for a trial of their respective capacities. In that of war particularly, no other country affords such opportunities to men of bold dispositions and suitable genius of making their way to the highest honours of their profession. Officers of all nations are found in the military lists of the several princes and potentates in Germany, who seem wisely deter-

determined to refuse no encouragement in that line to all who may deserve it, whatever their country or their religion.

Before the two last general wars, that which broke out on the demise of the emperor Charles the Sixth, and that which followed the short peace that intervened, domestic leisure and security had rendered Germany a scene of the most extensive exhibition and remuneration of their talents to men of ingenuity in all denominations. This happy period lasted from the pacification of Westphaly, a space of more than fourscore years. During this auspicious season of internal tranquillity, as people were under no apprehensions of civil hostilities and devastations, they were able to give full scope to their propensity to the polite and brilliant arts ; those in particular that conduce to magnificence and embellish-

bellishment met no where with a more generous support and recompence. Architecture, painting, and sculpture, were eminently patronised. A prodigious number of palaces and splendid edifices were erected, and sumptuously adorned. Germany became, in short, a country as worthy of the inspection of a traveller as any part of Europe.

There was hardly any of their princes, either ecclesiastical or secular, who did not expend very considerable sums in the article of building, and all its numerous concomitances. Many of them, indeed, carried their passion for that, then, prevalent mode beyond all the bounds of moderation, and almost credibility, when we consider the little proportion there was between their finances and their undertakings.

Next

Next to Lewis the Fourteenth of France, who was, to do him justice, an illustrious patron of all the fine arts, no princes in his time were more deserving of applause, in that respect, than those of Germany. Italy, Spain, and even England, which could best afford it, imitated him but feebly; while the sovereigns of Brandenburg, Saxony, Bavaria, and the Palatinate, the last especially, by examples of the most princely munificence to artists of merit, were animating their countrymen to give them a liberal countenance and reception.

This patronage was the more remarkable, as it was dictated by the mere impulse of their separate inclination, and by no means resulted from a proneness to imitate such of their fellow princes as delighted in these pursuits: no men affecting more to act independently of each others rules and notion

notions than the divers sovereigns of Germany.

The models they chiefly copy after are usually fetched from other countries, and they are very desirous of being thought the introducers of any improvements from abroad. But even in these they are studious to strike out such marks of disparity from the original pattern as may sufficiently shew them to be principally guided by their own ideas, and to stand in no need of the produce of foreign invention—this being a talent of which the Germans are fully persuaded they possess a more copious measure than any other people.

The consequence of this frame of mind is a remarkable variety in the humours and manners of their different courts, which are very far from reflecting the image of each

each other, and, in many instances, affect as little resemblance as possible.

This spirit of independence, either of example or of influence, is the rule of their private, as well as of their public conduct. They steer their own course, regardless of that pursued by others ; and herein their fancies, their whims, and their passions, are principally consulted : in the gratification of these they seem to defy all censure, and scruple no expence.

Thus one of them filled his household with female attendants, whose business it was to perform the task of the men. Another turned his residence into a magazine of musical instruments, bestowing preferences on those who devised the most curious in their kind : and of one it is recorded, that he made it a standing regulation

tion to oblige those, to whom he granted an audience, to partake in equal share with him of a stated quantity of liquor before they proceeded to business.

A custom similar to this still prevails in some of the German courts, where a visitor is initiated, and purchases in a manner his freedom, by submitting to drink till he has lost the use of his reason. This practice, however, was more prevalent formerly than at present, especially at the Palatine court, when it resided at Heidelberg. Bacchanalian meetings were often held on the spot adjoining to the famous tun; the presence of which, it seems, was calculated to inspire ideas of that tendency.

But though frolics of this sort are not so frequent as of yore, they are even now far from being obsolete, in the ecclesiasti-

cal courts particularly, from which, while gallantry must, by the rules of decorum, be banished, table debauchery is so little excluded, that it is carried no where to a greater excess.

This habit of hard drinking is a remnant of that antient etiquette, if one so may term it, which subsisted in the days of their ancestors, at the time when they were so manfully resisting the invasions of the Romans. As the utmost frankness and candour, and a rooted abhorrence of all dissimulation, constituted their national character, and were by them esteemed the noblest qualities of human nature, they took all precautions to perpetuate such a spirit, by putting it out of every one's power to swerve from it in essential matters. For this reason, in their public assemblies, whatever related to state affairs,

was reserved for deliberation and debate, after their souls were elevated by liquor to a pitch of boldness and resolution that would scorn to admit of any low-minded thought, any of those timid, feeble ideas, which, in their sober hours, have sometimes too much ascendency over persons of discreet and circumspectful dispositions, and engage them to conceal their real sentiments on subjects, whereon it behoves them to be open and explicit, and to disclose their minds without any disguise.

But in process of time the primitive intent and motive of this indulgence were forgotten ; and an institution, which at first had been attended with salutary consequences, was at last converted into an ignominious abuse, and became deservedly a reproach to the German nation, from

whence it spread to all its northern neighbours.

These scandalous compotations were become so customary and general in the last century, that even foreign ministers and ambassadors were not exempted from paying tribute to this fashionable infamy at their public reception. This was remarkably experienced by two of our countrymen, the Lord Leicester in his embassy from Charles the First to the Court of Denmark, and by Sir William Temple, when he was sent by Charles the Second to negotiate a treaty with the celebrated Vangalen, the martial bishop of Munster. Notwithstanding they were both men of noted sobriety, and eminent for their wisdom and philosophical disposition, no regard was had to that part of their character upon this occasion ; and they were obliged

to comply with the established rule in its
fullest extent.

The secular courts in Germany, though not averse to these practices, seem rather inclined to gallantry; more, indeed, as some have thought proper to insinuate, to that refined species which is known by the name of Platonism, than to the less innocent and pure. Such is the plea alleged in extenuation of Cicisbeim, imported from Italy into some places in Germany. But these pretences are too ridiculous to be credited.

The Court of Dresden, under the reign of Frederic Augustus, King of Poland, was the center of the very reverse of Platonic passions. Few, if any, European princes, were more notorious in the variety of their amours. It must, how-

ever, be confessed, that he conducted them with an air of delicacy and politeness which threw a veil over his irregularities, and rendered them less glaring and indecent. The persons whom he distinguished by his several attachments were as remarkable for their accomplishments of mind as for their beauty. His principal favourite, the famous Countess of Konigsmark, was a woman of the sublimest understanding, and possessed of so many amiable qualities, that her personal charms were the least valuable of her numerous attractions.

His conduct and behaviour with the fair sex was, in all respects, accompanied with a decorum that shewed he was far from being indiscriminate in the choice of women, and abandoned to the blind impulse of unsentimental passion.

The

The failings of this celebrated prince were upon the whole amply redeemed with his virtues. His mildness of temper, his affable behaviour, his liberality to his courtiers, his generous attention to the indigent youth of genteel families, for whose education and support he made a noble academical foundation, his extensive humanity to such of his subjects as had felt the calamities of war ; these, and many other deeds of benignity and munificence, greatly atoned for his foibles. Happy it were if all the princes who are guilty of these would also prove as solicitous as he was, to counterbalance them by a parity of meritorious actions.

22 NOV 1968

C H A P. IV.

Of the Saxons—Their Genius, Courage, and other useful and agreeable Qualifications—Beauty and Engagingness of the Saxon Women—Austrian Women—Austrian Men—Of the House of Austria.

THE inhabitants of Saxony are accounted the prime of all the German nation. They have long been esteemed the most sensible and ingenious of their countrymen by those foreigners who have travelled in that part of Germany: nor do the other natives of that vast region themselves seem to entertain a different opinion. Their capacity is so well known, and so universally avowed, that an individual of that country stands a fairer chance for promotion

motion on that account ; and is frequently indebted for his success over competitors to that cause alone ; so prevalent is the public persuasion of their superior merit, and so conducive to incline people in their favour.

The Saxons have always been remarkable for natural courage, as well as for bodily strength and activity. The great Gustavus Adolphus, a keen discerner of the qualities of mankind, was so well aware of these advantages in them, that he enjoined his generals to recruit his armies principally from Saxony.

But beside those qualifications which nature has given them for the field, and which have enabled them to make so conspicuous a figure in the military annals of Germany, they are no less noted for those
that

that fit a man for the most arduous undertakings, either civil, studious, or political. They are indefatigable in their pursuits, and display the most laborious perseverance, especially in their application to the arts and sciences, wherein they have produced the most illustrious names of all Germany. Leibnits and Puffendorf were Saxons, to omit a multitude of others.

Neither are they inferior in those accomplishments and talents that secure an agreeable reception, and prove so effectually instrumental to advancement in courts. This in particular is a stage whereon they usually act their parts to admiration, as they are complete masters of that suppleness and condescension of behaviour which gains partisans and well-wishers, and of that subtlety and penetration which turns every circumstance to account.

To

To this may be added, a vivacity of disposition that distinguishes them from all the rest of the Germans in a very peculiar manner. It renders their society highly acceptable ; and by circulating a spirit of pleasure, affords them occasions of manifesting their wit and readiness of thought. Herein they incomparably excel all the other Germans ; as they do also in the secondary branches of polite endowments, such as a propriety of taste for magnificence in their apparel, furniture, diversions, and every other department of brilliancy and eclat. In all which it is very well worth remarking, that they possess the valuable secret of uniting splendour with œconomy.

Saxony was, during the reign of Frederic Augustus, already mentioned, the most splendid court in all Germany. It was

was resorted to as such, not only from every part of Germany, but from every country in Europe, France itself not excepted. The public festivals that took place on various occasions had not their equals any where; and the hospitable and generous treatment of all who were invited to partake of them, was truly singular and unprecedented.

The Saxon women yield in nothing to the men, and are equally accounted the first in Germany. Their persons are so superiorly charming and preferable in whatever can recommend them to the notice of the other sex, that the German youth often visit Saxony in quest of companions for life. Exclusive of their beauty and comeliness of appearance, they are usually brought up in the knowledge of those arts, both useful and ornamental, that are so brilliant

brilliant an addition to female attractions. But what chiefly enhances their value, and gives it reality and duration, is a sweetness of temper, and a festivity of disposition, that never fail to endear them on a very slight acquaintance. To crown all, they generally become patterns of conjugal fidelity and tenderness; and as their natural frankness sets them above dissimulation, they love to the last, when once they have bestowed their affections.

The personal charms for which the Saxon women are so justly celebrated, are likewise no small inducement for the votaries of gallantry to give them unrivalled preference in quality of mistresses—a scene of life for which such of them as embrace it are perfectly calculated, as they excel in the allurements of dress and decoration, are skilful in music, and, from their innate liveliness,

Liveliness, extremely addicted to all the gayer amusements ; to say nothing of their facetiousness and ingenuity, of which most Saxon women possess no trifling share, as they are very careful to improve their minds by reading and instructive conversation.

Far different from this character is that of the women in most other parts of Germany, particularly of the Austrian, whose disposition and qualifications seem to form a perfect contrast to theirs.

Notwithstanding the advantages of size and make, their looks and features, though not unsightly, betray a vacancy of that life and spirit, without which beauty is uninteresting, and, like a mere picture, becomes utterly void of that indication of sensibility which alone can awaken our feelings.

As their education is conducted by the rules of the grossest superstition, and they are taught little else than set forms of devotion, they arrive to years of maturity uninstructed in the use of their reason, and generally continue profoundly ignorant the remainder of their days, which are spent, or rather loitered away in apathy and indolence. Having learned none of the ingenious methods of making time fit lightly, their hours of leisure, which their inactivity swells to a large amount, are heavy and oppressive ; and from their want of polite instruction, the subjects of their discourse are insipid to a wretched degree. So irksome to them is that kind of society, which consists in a reciprocation of thoughts, that dress and diversions are the only refuge from the tediousness which hangs over their lives.

The

The principal happiness of the Austrian ladies of fashion consists, in a great measure, in ruminating on the dignity of their birth and family, on the antiquity of their race, the rank they hold, the respect attending it, and the prerogatives they enjoy over the inferior classes, whom they treat with a ridiculous superciliousness, and hold in the most unreasonable contempt.

In the mean while they cannot be said to counterbalance these flaws and defects in their character, by sagacity and good management in their domestic affairs. They are apt to neglect them in a most unaccountable manner. They dwell at home as if they were among strangers, careless of what passes there, and suffer confusion and disorder to prevail among their dependants, without feeling disquietude.

Great frequenters of churches, their piety is made up of the strictest conformity to all the exteriors of religion. They profess a boundless belief, or rather credulosity in all the silly legends with which their books of devotion are filled.

From the coldness of their constitution they are not prone to afford materials for any romantic adventures ; and their matrimonial connections are seldom regulated by the softer passions, as the strictest equality of birth and rank are deemed indispensable requisites in those who propose to be united.

It ought, however, to be acknowledged, that great changes have taken place in the character of the Austrian women of late years ; and that this description of them does by no means include such numbers as

it would have done formerly. During the reign of the late Empress Queen, the etiquette long observed at the court of Vienna underwent great alterations. The gloominess that had characterised it gave way to more freedom and gaiety; which, of consequence, were quickly diffused among the upper ranks, and from them descended to the lower. The whole mass of society thus gradually proceeded to adopt new ideas and modes of living in a variety of instances; and the Austrians form at present a much more agreeable people than before. In this reformation both sexes of course went hand in hand; but the women, it is thought, have had the advantage of the men, whether from the natural aptitude of the female part of the polite world, to seize more readily the improvements laid before them, or from the obvious desire they must have felt, to con-

form themselves to the example of their sovereign, whose manners must naturally have had a peculiar influence over those of her own sex.

To make up, in the mean time, for the severity of the strictures that have been passed upon the Austrian ladies, it must also be allowed, that they are endowed with a great fund of sincerity and candour. Though much on the reserve, and from the loftiness of their disposition prone to keep an unnecessary distance, they are susceptible of the highest sentiments of benevolence, and capable of the noblest attachment to those whom they think deserving of a place in their esteem and favour. Hence they are uncommonly warm and zealous in the cause of those whom they have admitted to their friendship.

Another

Another peculiar excellence in their character is, that they are utter strangers to coquetry, and are frank and ingenuous in all matters of love. When they do engage in it, their disinterestedness and generosity are conspicuous, and supply, in a great measure, the absence of the sprightly and entertaining qualifications.

The people of Austria are in general as little noted for eminence of parts as any in all Germany. A vein of heaviness and torpidity is visible in all classes, and influences their most common proceedings. In few countries will a traveller of a lively turn find less resources for improvement or pleasure among the natives.

The lower tribes are so gross and vulgar that they may well pass among the Germans, as the Bœotians did among the an-

cient Greeks, for the dullest of all their countrymen. Their principal merit is, downrightness and simplicity of heart; and it were injustice to deny them an abundant measure of that *Fides Germanica et Sincera*; that staunch German honesty (to use the expression of a celebrated prince of the empire to an English ambassador) for which the generality of their countrymen are so deservedly renowned,

The upper classes are almost inaccessible, unless they are addressed by persons whose titles are adequate to their own. But none are esteemed such at Vienna, unless they are conferred by the emperor, who, being reputed the first sovereign in Christendom, is therefore considered by them as the prime fountain of honour and dignity throughout the world. Elated by these motives, they look upon themselves as su-

perior to the nobility of all other countries, and hold, in a secondary light, the distinctions proceeding from foreign courts.

The pride of some nations, who deem themselves preferable to others, and equal to the most illustrious, has no unsolid foundations. Though vain glory deserves rebuke, and modesty becomes nations as well as individuals, yet when famous names are cited, and celebrated atchievements and transactions produced in support of such pretensions, the world is ready enough to excuse a little excess of boasting and presumption. But when a people, in no wise remarkable for those conspicuous qualities which exalt some nations so much above others, have the absurd confidence to aspire at the highest degree of renown, and to believe themselves respectable beyond all others, then, indeed, they fully authorise

the severest confutation of their impertinence.

Such is precisely the case of the Austrians, whose arrogance in this particular is unsufferable, and who, with all their haughtiness, have no other right to the pre-eminence they claim than that of a multitude of sonorous titles, with which the bearers are more elevated here than in any other country in Europe. They seem absolutely to forget by what means titles are often, or rather usually, procured here as well as elsewhere, and on whom and from what motives they are commonly bestowed. Provided they can be obtained, they think themselves justifiable in the opinion they immediately assume of their personal merit and importance, and in undervaluing all who are not distinguished by some nominal decoration. Though such infatuation is

not

not unknown in other European courts, it reigns with double force at the imperial, where an untitled man is a being inadmissible among the great, and cannot challenge the appellation of a person of fashion.

Hence it is the people of Austria look with so much astonishment on those foreigners, who are announced among them as persons of great birth and rank in their own country, and yet possess no titles: the English especially, who, of all people, next to the Dutch, are least known by such badges of imaginary honours, are viewed with the more surprise, as their opulence enables them to vie in figure and expence with individuals of the very first consequence at that, as well as every other court.

The chief grandeur of the Austrian people

people of high rank consists in the sumptuousness, or rather extravagance, which they affect to display in their tables, equipages, and retinue. In this they are faithfully copied by the inferior classes of nobility, as they stile at Vienna those families, whose exaltation is of a recent date, or those persons whose dignities are only official.

Such are in general the notions and manners of those who compose the genteel part of society in Austria.

It would, in the mean time, be an inequitable omission to pass over unnoticed the merits of their military list—a body of men who have given so many signal proofs of the most heroic courage, and whose aptitude for war yields to that of no people whatsoever. Witness the bravery which

which they have for ages displayed in their frequent wars with the Turks, and particularly the invincible resolution with which they sustained the siege of Vienna in the last century,

It cannot, however, be denied, that in almost all the wars, wherein the ambition of their sovereigns has so often involved them, the Austrians have usually been but the instruments of more able artists. Nature seems to have formed them rather for soldiers than commanders; and the house of Austria has mostly owed its advancement, its grandeur, and its preservation, to other abilities than originated in its native soil.

This will appear no unfounded assertion to those who reflect, that the emperor Charles the Fifth's best generals were principally Italians or Spaniards, that Vienna owed

owed its deliverance to the great Sobiesky, that the conquest of Hungary was due to the military talents of Charles Duke of Lorrain, and the still greater genius of prince Eugene, not improperly styled in his day the victorious champion of the house of Austria. He was incomparably the most successful general that ever bore arms in the service of that fortunate family.

It is but since the demise of that celebrated warrior, and the commencement of the reign of the late Empress Queen, that the Austrians have appeared with any considerable lustre in the capacity of chief movers and conductors in the operations of war.

But such is the prejudice of the natives of Austria in favour of their own character,

ter, that it would be dangerous to mention these disagreeable truths among them. Persuaded, as they are, of the greatness of their abilities, they would fain ascribe to these the rise and power of their sovereigns; while, at the same time, the concurrence of propitious accidents is so well known throughout the political world to have been the real basis of the Austrian greatness; that a celebrated painter, so long since as the days of the emperor Maximilian, at the close of the fifteenth century, represented Fortune and Hymen bringing to that prince the crowns and armorial ensigns of those countries, of which his family had gained the possession by lucky casualties, or by marriage. To this last and principal cause of its uncommon prosperity is owing the famous distich

Bellagerant fortis, tu, felix Austria, nube;
Nam quæ Mars aliis dat tibi regna Venus.

Let

Let the valiant wage war ; thou, happy Austria, marry ; for realms, which Mars gives to others, Venus bestows on thee.

It is highly worthy of remark, that whether in prosperous or adverse fortune, the lofty spirit of this family has never suffered an alteration, and has long been proverbial. Notwithstanding it has several times been reduced to the necessity of begging for assistance at every prince's door, as Bolingbroke emphatically expresses it, yet in the midst of this humiliation it has still retained a stile of pre-eminence, and even of imperiousness, the more blameable, as it might have proved essentially detrimental to its interests, had the potentates, to whom it made application, been equally tenacious of their respective pretensions.

Thus when the emperor Leopold solicited

cited the assistance of Sobiesky, king of Poland, it was with difficulty that his ministers could prevail upon him to give that monarch the title of Majesty ; though his own distress was such, that he must, without that prince's aid, have been totally ruined.

When the same emperor had been rescued from a situation almost as deplorable as the former, chiefly by the treasures and the arms of England, when encouraged and invited by the ministry of that kingdom, he had committed to its trust and protection the hopes and claims to the Spanish crown of his son Charles ~~III~~, afterwards the sixth emperor of that name. He still, in his epistolary correspondence with his generous ally and benefactress, Queen Ann, preserved a ceremonious air of superiority, and treated her in terms rather

ther becoming a sovereign who graciously receives the services justly due, and faithfully paid by a loyal and affectionate subject, than such as might have been expected from a needy ally, whose all was at stake, and whose safety depended on the support of that power, which he ran the risque of offending by this dangerous display of unseasonable vanity.

This lofty spirit has, however, had its utility ; it has more than once produced an unconquerable fortitude in the most tremendous perils. Thus, to adduce one instance out of many, the firmness exhibited by the late Empress Queen, in the terrible trial that attended her succession to the dominions of her father, excited the admiration of all Europe, and contributed not a little to frustrate the designs of the
formi-

formidable league that threatened at first to overwhelm her.

It were to be wished that the Austrian princes had paid more attention to the arts and sciences than to many other objects of a trivial nature, with which several have too much condescended to employ their minds. In consequence of this neglect the state of literature and learning is on no very splendid footing at Vienna, and flourishes but little in any of the Austrian dominions.

But the truth is, that while none of them have ever proved very zealous patrons of the muses, seldom has any one failed to espouse, with a high hand, the cause of their communion, and to exert his utmost warmth in the propagation of the Romish tenets, to which no princes were ever more

G **violently**

violently and more fatally addicted. Numberless have been the calamities occasioned by their intolerant disposition ; and their intemperate attachment to Popery has more than once exposed them to very serious difficulties and dangers.

The present emperor has, it must be acknowledged to his great honour, very much deviated from this erroneous track, and seems disposed to make the world amends for the mistakes of his predecessors in religious matters. Happy should his intentions and endeavours, in so salutary a reformation, meet with no interruption from less desirable and less meritorious projects.

When it has been said that Vienna abounds with princes, counts, and barons, little more remains to be told ; and they whose

whose motives for visiting foreign countries are either instruction or curiosity, will do well to shorten their stay here, lest the contagion of haughtiness and self-conceit should infect them; vices which seem to be epidemical among persons of any birth or rank in this part of Germany.

Some individuals of great merit are undoubtedly not wanting in so large a capital; but 'tis a perplexing task to find them out in the crouds of insipid characters that surround and obstruct, in a manner, the access to them. Not to forget, that no small weight of recommendation, and personal importance, is too often requisite in order to procure an introduction to their acquaintance.

CHAMO

20

C H A P. V.

Causes of the Revolutions in Germany—Imperial and free Cities—Their Opulence—Wealth and Pride of their Merchants and chief Citizens—Benefits accruing to Germany from the Emigration of the French Protestants, particularly to the Country of Brandenburgh.

To those who consider the multiplicity of changes that have taken place in the government of the various people in Europe, it appears wonderful that hardly one has found means to preserve that propitious form which, at one time or other, has been settled among them all successively; and that, with few exceptions, despotic power should have gradually, and with very in-

considerable opposition on the part of the community, made its way every where.

It has been a matter of great surprise to those who have studied the temper and disposition of the Germans, and are well versed in their history, that a nation so rough, so warlike, so manly, and so intrepid, should have submitted to the arbitrary government that so diffusely prevails in that extensive region.

In the time of the Romans they were the only people truly free. Though rude and uncivilised, they had perfect conceptions of political liberty; insomuch, that their system of governing attracted the particular attention of one of the greatest politicians of antiquity, and afforded him an opportunity of giving to the classical world

world one of the noblest productions that ever graced the Roman language.

But the wonder ceases, when we reflect that the Germans were overcome by nations descended from their own ancestors, and who, on leaving their native soil in order to conquer and settle in other countries, did not degenerate, but preserved entire the resolution and bravery, together with the hardy manners, of their forefathers. To these, by their mixture with the people whose subjection to the Romans they had transferred to themselves, they added those arts and improvements which Rome, by its numerous colonies, had disseminated through all its conquests and possessions.

Thus when Charlemain, the founder of the western empire, undertook to civilise and reduce the Germans under his obedi-

ence, he attacked them with armies composed of men, not only as robust and valiant as they, but better armed and disciplined, and wholly untainted with that effeminacy which had been the chief cause of the Romans being formerly overthrown, in spite of their superior knowledge in military affairs. Yet even with such men he found it no easy task to subdue the Germans, whose obstinate attachment to their liberty animated them to the most violent and repeated struggles to maintain it.

In the course of succeeding ages, when arts and commerce began to flourish, the remembrance and spirit of their ancient freedom revived by degrees. Many cities grew to such a height of opulence, and consequently became so sensible of their importance, and manifested so bold a determination to purchase independence at any

rate, that, partly from pecuniary considerations, partly from the well-grounded apprehension of not being able to assert their authority, the princes who had domineered over them thought it prudent to give up their pretensions of sovereignty. These cities, thus emancipated from tyranny, formed themselves into commonwealths, and entered into leagues with each other for their reciprocal security and defence. This gave rise to the famous Aنسatic association, which became so formidable as to command respect from the most powerful monarchs. They continued in this prosperous situation till about the middle of the sixteenth century, when, through disunion among themselves, and the general confusion of those turbulent times, a door was opened for the renewal of claims against them. These claims were opposed with vigour, though too often unsuccessfully,

fully, as, after the dissolution of their common alliance, they had singly to withstand the efforts of each respective pretender. These disputes, frequently dropped and resumed, were not fully terminated till the general pacification produced by the treaty of Westphaly, when the several cities, now enjoying freedom, and stiled imperial, were confirmed in the possession of their various immunities and privileges, which have been uninterrupted to this day.

These cities are still numerous, and fuller of trade and riches than any others in Germany. From the greater abundance of conveniences and accommodations of all kinds, many of them are places of resort for the politer classes, especially from those districts that are under the dominion of princes ; whose subjects are glad of opportunities to visit those seats of liberty. By the

the crowds that often fill them one may not unfairly conclude, that men are drawn thither by a natural attraction, not the less strong and cogent for being sometimes imperceptible and involved with other motives.

The inhabitants of these cities always were, and are still, the most eminent for ingenuity and industry of all their countrymen. Their abilities and skilfulness, in all sorts of manual arts, have long been universally acknowledged. The produce of their workmanship furnishes not only Germany, but also the neighbouring countries, the north of Europe in particular, with a great variety of commercial articles. Many of their merchants have made a distinguished figure. If France boasts a Jaques Coeur, and England a Sir Thomas Gresham, Germany produced a Fugger, whose generous

generous treatment of Charles the Fifth, in the remittance of the immense sums of money due to him from that emperor, was never surpassed, if ever equalled by any subject.

As recourse is often had to the rich burghers of these imperial cities, not only by the indigent petty princes in their neighbourhood, but also by the more considerable, it is not wonderful if they are proud of their wealth, from which they derive such importance. Their magistrates and Patrician families are apt accordingly to manifest a consciousness of their weight and consequence, which is rather offensive to those with whom they have concerns, and sometimes to strangers who travel under the protection of a title, and are not a little surprised at the small regard it procures them in such places.

It is chiefly through means of these cities that Germany has preserved its commercial interests, and carries on a very extensive and prosperous trade. It would therefore redound much to the detriment of the divers sovereigns of the empire to abridge their liberties. They seem, in general, sensible of this, and are not so devoid of discernment as to suffer their ambition, great and restless as it is, to get the better of their prudence. To this motive may in no small measure be attributed the tranquillity with which these cities enjoy their freedom and privileges, and the constant care which is taken to give them no molestation.

Another of those causes, to which the empire owes much of its commercial prosperity and domestic improvements, was the prodigious emigration of the French refugees

refugees towards the close of the last century.

Germany was one of those countries to which Lewis the Fourteenth did most essential service by the expulsion of his Protestant subjects. The German princes and states of that communion received them with open arms, and afforded them all the encouragement which humanity and good policy could suggest. As these refugees came not empty handed, they facilitated every measure that was taken in their behalf, and very soon amply rewarded their protectors by the introduction of many valuable branches of lucrative business into their dominions. In a short space of time a spirit of beneficial activity visibly took place of the tardiness and want of vigour and skill in the occupations of peace, which long dissensions had occasioned among

among the Germans, and which were evils that required, perhaps, no less uncommon a remedy to be completely cured.

A multitude of persons, eminent in arms or literature, and in every liberal accomplishment, accompanied this flight of a people, whose dereliction of their native country was influenced by the most laudable motives that can actuate the souls of men, those of conscience and religion. Without enquiring into the wisdom or imprudence of that zeal, which impelled the French Protestants to prefer the free profession of their doctrines to all other considerations, suffice it to say, that they exhibited, on this occasion, the most convincing and unequivocal testimonies of the sincerity of their principles; if such may be deemed a voluntary exile from the land of their birth, the loss of their inheritance, and

and the deprivation of all hopes of ever repossessing, or even revisiting what was thus forsaken. Add to this, the uncertainty of their future fortunes in foreign parts, the inevitable difficulties that must have attended so hazardous a retreat ; as the very discovery of their intentions, and even wishes to attempt it, was sufficient to render them criminal in the eye of their persecutors, and to subject them to the severest penalties. But no hardship or danger could deter them from their purpose. It was not surprising, therefore, that in an age when religious motives were so prevalent every where, they should, after manifesting so much resolution, and making such sacrifices in the cause of Protestantism, be universally considered as its most illustrious confessors and champions ; and that their reception should be universally accompanied with so many proofs of respect and benevo-

benevolence from those of their communion, among whom they chose the places of their refuge.

The country most benefited by these celebrated exiles was Brandenburg ; the sovereign of which, at that time, was the truly great elector Frederic William, whose heroic virtues and abilities laid the foundation of the subsequent grandeur of his family. This excellent prince, whose goodness of heart and magnanimity of soul were always prompting him to undertake or to encourage whatever could conduce to the welfare of the public, readily embraced this opportunity of promoting it, and of signalising his munificent disposition. He afforded accordingly the most generous assistance to the French refugees. At their head was the famous Marshal Schomberg ; for whom, and the principal gentlemen

H that

that accompanied him, he made a most liberal provision, appointing him to the supreme command of his armies, and bestowing all manner of preferments on his countrymen. It may be added, that their gratitude and zeal in the service of that worthy prince, and of his successors, has, on many occasions, been highly remarkable and meritorious.

It was greatly owing to that timely generosity of this wise prince, that his military establishment became the most respectable for its discipline, and the experience of its officers, of any in Germany. The French, who were at that æra the most skilful of any nation in warlike affairs, introduced their knowledge into his armies, and brought them to such a degree of expertness, that no troops in the empire exceeded them in any of the requisites of

their profession. Their superiority was manifested in a signal manner some years after at the celebrated battle of Blenheim. Of all the different bodies of Germans, they only resisted the first onset of the French, whose fire and impetuosity in the commencement of the action bore down every part of the allied army, the English and Brandenburghers excepted.

Nor were the Tactics of the French the sole utility arising from the favourable reception they met with in this part of the empire. Berlin shortly became the Athens of Germany. The spirit of literature, for which the French nation was then so conspicuous, diffused itself with the greatest rapidity over that capital. Liberal manners and intellectual refinements made so quick a progress, and wrought so powerful an

alteration, that it became the most brilliant city throughout the whole empire.

Brandenburgh was not, however, the sole country thus benefited. Other numerous colonies of French were also dispersed throughout Germany, and disseminated a taste for polite arts and improvements, of which it stood much in need at that period. It had, in a manner, but lately emerged from civil distractions, and the face of the land yet bore the marks of the savage fury, that had so unrelentingly desolated its most beautiful cities and provinces. But this transplantation of so polished and refined a people into that country soon roused the endeavours of the natives to imitate them.

To this happy emulation Germany owes the renovation of its former splendour, and the

the revival, or melioration of the useful, as well as the ornamental branches of knowledge and ingenuity. Many an immense inhospitable tract, never cultivated before, or long neglected, was now tilled and made profitable. New sources of fertility were discovered by adopting more profitable methods of agriculture ; and districts heretofore poor, and almost destitute of inhabitants, became rich and populous.

Whole towns were founded and peopled by these French adventurers ; and some of the principal of the ancient cities received an additional splendor from the completer taste in architecture, which they introduced into those quarters assigned to them for their residence.

It were endless to enumerate the advantages that accrued to Germany from this

intermixture of its natives with those of France. The sprightliness of these latter gradually blending itself with the solidity of the former, contributed to make them a much more agreeable and engaging people. The spirit of society succeeded to that solemnity and reserve which had so long cast a stiffness and gloom over their mutual intercourse. In a few years several of the German courts were allowed, even by the French, to be complete patterns of polite festivity.

In private and domestic circles gaiety in conversation obtained the ascendant over convivial debauchery; and the enjoyment of wit, and pleasure of discourse, were proposed as the only proper criterion of genteel company.

Such was the happy reformation of manners

ners for which the Germans were indebted to the French. Their language also partook of this adoption. It grew the favourite one at divers courts, and was, by no few of their literati, gradually substituted in room of the Latin, which alone had long been thought adequate to the purposes of erudition.

This preference of the French to the Latin tongue proved, in course of time, a material step to the improvement of their own. It was natural to conclude, that it might attain a like degree of embellishment and perfection through the same proportion of study and care which had raised the reputation of the other. Hence, in a short lapse of years, the Germans made a great progress in polishing and bringing it to a standard of elegance, energy, and precision. They now can boast several writers

of approved merit on a variety of subjects; to say nothing of the excellent translations they have made of the principal authors, ancient and modern.

This humane treatment of the French did the more honour to the good nature, discernment, and equity, of the Germans, as it happened at the very time that Lewis the Fourteenth was committing those enormities in the Palatinate, which rendered him an object of execration to all the feeling part of mankind, and excited a spirit of universal indignation and enmity against his person and politics throughout all Europe. But the Germans had too much sense and honour to confound the innocent with the guilty, and still continued their generous behaviour to his unfortunate subjects.

In return for the tyranny and barbarities he had exercised over these, it was but natural they should become his most violent and implacable enemies. Such of them as entered into the military service of the powers at war with him, proved accordingly the most forward and daring upon every occasion, and incessantly sought opportunities to glut a revenge that had sufficient cause to be boundless and insatiable. This inveteracy, though venal or shallow writers have had the audaciousness or the absurdity to reprehend it, the unanimous voice of the unprejudiced world has loudly justified.

Among the many heroes produced by this spirit of resentment, none signalised themselves more than those who fought under German banners. They furnished the forces of the Protestant princes with officers

officers of consummate experience and bravery ; several of whom displayed such uncommon talents in their profession as to be preferred, though strangers, to the command of armies. Their descendants bear the same character, and afford some of the most illustrious generals in Germany at this day.

CHAP.

C H A P. VI.

Moderation of the Germans in religious Matters—
 Differences among the Protestants—Of Luther—
 Of the ecclesiastical Princes of Germany—Their
 Riches, Conduct, and Character—Of the Secular
 Princes in Germany—Their Bravery and military
 Virtues—General Ideas of their Power, and
 Methods of governing—Of the Sovereigns of the
 House of Brandenburg.

AMONG the various countries which the French Protestants chose for an asylum, they could not have selected at that period one more proper for a safe retreat from religious persecution than Germany.

The lenity and moderation prevailing there in affairs of a spiritual nature was,
 next

next to the generous toleration exercised in Holland, much beyond any thing known at that narrow-minded and superstitious æra in any part of Europe. England itself was then agitated by a spirit of religious intolerance, and full of suspicions and enmities on account of miserable differences in opinion.

This happy temperance in matters, in themselves of so indifferent a nature, and yet so apt to set mankind in a conflagration, not only subsists, but has fortunately gained considerable ground in Germany, notwithstanding the indiscreet warmth occasionally exerted by those ungovernable zealots, with which Christendom has at all times been more or less infested.

No stronger proofs of the reciprocal toleration, cultivated by the Protestants and Roma-

Romanists, can be adduced, than that some of their cathedral chapters are composed of an equal number of each persuasion, and that even bishops are chosen by turns out of each.

Several of the German princes have carried this conciliating disposition to a very laudable extent. The first king of Prussia took a remarkable opportunity of testifying his desire to bring about a cordial union between the Episcopal and Presbyterian parties, by appointing two bishops, though he was himself a Calvinist, to officiate at his coronation, and by allowing, at the same time, of several forms and ceremonies but ill agreeing with the notions of the latter sect.

It must, however, be acknowledged, that this lenity in church matters, among the

the Germans, though general, is far from being universal. It unhappily remains to be wished, that some of them would remit of their severity against the members of other communions. Protestants and Romanists are equally culpable in this respect ; but the tenaciousness of the former, in the various notions that occasion misunderstandings among themselves, is still more shameful, as it often produces the most uncharitable and scandalous treatment of each other, the more criminal, as their differences in opinion are too unessential to merit serious disputes.

Nothing has been more detrimental to the Protestant interest than these absurd altercations about things of no importance. It is much to be lamented, that after so nobly shaking off the papal yoke they did not make it a common cause, and remain firmly united

united in friendship and mutual communication of privileges, for the safety and preservation of their whole body, against the machinations of a foe, whose implacability they were soon taught by fatal experience.

The century preceding that of Luther had already shewn what they were to expect who durst assume the character of reformers. The fate of the unfortunate John Huds, and Jerom of Prague, had given mankind sufficient warning. But the courage of Luther was proof against all intimidations. Never was any man better calculated for the work he took in hand, nor knew more properly how to avail himself of the disrespect and aversion which the proceedings of the see of Rome had met with so deservedly. His penetration and discernment led him to perceive, that the time was come for a more successful opposition

sition to its pretensions than heretofore ; and his resolution in persevering was equal to the confidence he had shewn in commencing so dangerous a task. His personal intrepidity was such, that, notwithstanding the advice of his friends, enforced by the two dreadful examples above mentioned, he ventured himself in the midst of his enemies, and appeared in the presence of the emperor, and in the face of the diet of the whole Germanic empire, as a champion ready to assert the goodness of his cause against all opponents.

Under so undaunted a head it was natural the members should act with spirit. We find accordingly, that in a little time the reformation had made so rapid a progress as to defy the utmost efforts of the papal party, and to promise a settled and lasting prosperity. This, however, was not

not purchased without paying the price of much blood ; and convincing the persecutors of the Protestants, by an invincible resistance, that these were determined to shed their last drop sooner than submit.

Since the middle of the last century, when the sword of religious fury was sheathed, never, it is reasonably presumed, to be drawn again, the Protestants have much increased in strength and riches, and constitute undoubtedly, at present, as respectable and powerful a body as their antagonists. The Romanists in Germany cannot vie with the Protestants in the arts of industry and commerce, as the latter have in their possession the principal cities where trade and business flourish. The prospect of the liberty prevailing there, invites numbers to settle in them, which daily augments their wealth and importance ;

tance ; these accessions of inhabitants being composed of persons of property, or of those whose talents are calculated for the acquisition of it.

It is not, in the mean time, without a jealous eye, that the Romish ecclesiastical princes behold this superior felicity of a people ; for whom, whatever their exterior conduct may appear, they still entertain a secret abhorrence, when they recollect what immense possessions have been torn from them by these upstarts, as they stile in the bitterness of their hearts all who have relinquished the Romish communion.

But if ambition and avidity could be satisfied, the Popish clergy in Germany still retain such a proportion of opulence and power as ought entirely to content them.

Excepting

Excepting the dominions of the house of Austria, the right of episcopal election is vested in the members of the various chapters; and every bishop thus chosen becomes immediately a sovereign. Some of the finest and most fertile countries in Germany are the patrimony of the church. Besides the three ecclesiastical electors, whose grandeur and prerogatives are well known, there are others hardly, if at all, their inferiors. Most of them display a magnificence equal to that of kings; and there is not one whose revenues are not quite princely. Even the secondary church livings are so noble and plentiful, that none but persons of birth are deemed worthy of them.

From these ecclesiastical principalities and estates are drawn the funds that support so many of the great families in Ger-

many, and so often restore to their ancient splendor such as are gone to decay. The promotion to a mitre amply enables the wearer to provide most liberally for every relation, however needy or covetous. Even a prebend of the middling sort sufficiently enables the incumbent to be generous and munificent.

There is certainly no country where the whole Hierarchy, both secular and regular, is on so beneficial and respectable a footing. There are no abbeys of which the Monks do not enjoy all the conveniences of life in equal abundance and splendor. Several abbots are sovereign princes. The respect paid to some female orders is such, that the abbess of a celebrated abbey in the city of Prague, enjoys the prerogative of crowning the Queen of Bohemia.

Sundry of these ecclesiastical princes affect a very warlike appearance, and seem chiefly taken up in military occupations, as in fortifying their towns, laying up magazines and stores, and making preparations for a vigorous defence against an enemy. Others have gone farther, and have made war their most serious business. Such, for instance, was the famous Bernard Van Galen, bishop of Munster, whose turn was entirely martial, and who was, in every respect, much more a general than a bishop.

The conduct and behaviour of such men prove clearly enough, that personal aggrandisement was the motive that influenced their vocation. This, indeed, is apparently the case with most of the younger sons of sovereign houses among those of the Romish persuasion. They have also

adopted another piece of policy, not a little conducive to the strengthening of their party ; that is, to confer a number of these important dignities upon a single person, thereby to collect that power from their union which they could not produce while divided.

The government and political maxims uppermost in the courts of these ecclesiastical princes differ little from those of temporal sovereigns. Their internal administration, indeed, is altogether more gentle, it has been said, than that of the secular. But they are equally punctilious in their claims and pretensions, and in asserting their most trifling prerogatives.

Among other peculiarities, their propensity to indulge their ruling passion is remarkable. Celibacy exempting them from that

that solicitude for posterity, which often checks an expensive disposition, they are apt to be limited by no bounds but those of their income, and to impair even this in pursuit of their gratifications. Some have lavished their whole revenues in needless buildings and plantations; and others have been so strangely addicted to hunting as to detriment the cultivation of the land, for the sake of enjoying that favourite diversion.

From this proneness to ways of living, so inconsistent with the purport of their profession, the Romish clergy in Germany, notwithstanding the powers they are invested with, and their princely revenues, are not held in the same degree of veneration as in several others of the Popish countries. They are, in fact, too much considered at present as mere men of the

world to meet with much implicit homage and deference in this discerning age.

We must not, therefore, be surprised to find the weight of their influence over the minds of men so considerably diminished, especially when we reflect on the progress which the liberty of thinking has made of late years in Germany. To such liberty, not improbably, this abuse of their power, in the heads of the Romish communion, has not a little contributed. All arguments and reasonings are vain, when the conduct and actions of men contradict their professions. Not only the multitude, but even persons of the best understanding, regulate their notions of things by the deeds much more than by the discourses of those who rule over them.

During the middle ages, through the
profound

profound ignorance of the times, the influence exercised by the clergy in Germany was so great and extensive, that even emperors have owed their exaltation to them. Rodolphus, the first prince of the house of Austria that ascended the imperial throne, was elected by means of his confessor, Albert, bishop of Ratisbon—a service for which ample returns have been made in the uncommon attachment of his descendants to churchmen, the zeal which they have constantly manifested in their support and protection, and the close adherence to those maxims, on which their credit and grandeur are founded.

Long has this greatness of the ecclesiastical body been a grievous mortification to the secular princes of Germany, who have omitted no opportunity of curtailing it, and would, were it in their power, most certainly

tainly abolish it. But the grandeur of the church is connected with so many motives to uphold it, independently of religion, that nothing short of a total revolution in politics, as well as in spiritual tenets, will ever be able to effect an overthrow of the Romish prelacy in the empire.

It has been maintained on the other hand, that these elective sovereignties form one of the least exceptionable parts of the Germanic constitution, as they open an ample prospect of the highest rewards to men of merit and abilities, and thus are a continual incentive to the exertion of capacity and the practice of virtue.

This, indeed, may appear true enough in speculation, but is not founded in experience. The only class of society to which these honours are accessible, is that of the very

very highest degree of nobility ; and the only qualities required to aspire successfully at these high promotions are, family interest and court intrigue. But neither of these are of a nature to benefit society, or to do honour to an individual ; they are found, on the contrary, the most effectual obstructions to the encouragement, or the recompence, of all true and eminent worth.

Persons thus preferred do not accordingly display, in a particular manner, any of those qualifications by which mankind might be brought to acknowledge them deserving of their good fortune. Learning and literature, of which one would peculiarly expect to find them zealous protectors, are not more rewarded or countenanced by them than by the secular princes of Germany.

These

These princes constitute a body of men who have long been famous for the great number of eminent characters they have produced, especially in the military world. The splendour of their birth, and the distinguished prerogatives with which it is accompanied, are very far from inducing them to be satisfied with a quiet enjoyment of their hereditary honours. There is not a race of men more active and ready to undergo all kind of labour suitable to their condition, in order to arrive at celebrity and importance.

No country in Europe affords such a numerous list of princes and individuals of illustrious families in the most arduous and hazardous employments. It is paying them no compliment to say, that the examples of their ancestors have not been lost upon them, and have, from generation to genera-

generation, excited an emulation which has often been productive of the noblest actions, and still continues unimpaired to this day.

Contrary to the inglorious, ignoble sloth, in which the nobles of some nations loiter away their whole lives, we see the young nobility of Germany ardent to occupy the field of action wherever it can be found. The armies, not only of the German sovereigns, but of all the kings and states in Europe, are crowded with soldiers of fortune from some of the most distinguished houses in Germany.

Herein they perfectly resemble the picture drawn of their ancestors by ancient authors, who represent the youthful part of the German nation, and especially of the principal families, as eagerly impatient to

to signalise their entrance into manhood by feats of arms, and seeking abroad for occasions to inure themselves betimes to war, when their own country was in peace.

The sovereigns of Germany, both ecclesiastical and secular, are invested with almost unlimited power in every thing that relates to their respective dominions. Though bound to act according to the general laws of the empire, they possess a degree of authority that sets them too much above control in all matters wherein themselves and their immediate subjects only are mutually concerned — those laws being chiefly resorted to in cases of disagreements and disputes between the several princes and states, to regulate the rights of whom they were principally made.

To

To do justice, however, to the sovereigns of Germany, they are seldom guilty of arbitrary proceedings; and despotism is certainly less exercised by them than by the other absolute princes in Europe. They whose authority is most felt, are the petty princes of the empire, whose ridiculous affectation to imitate the greater induces them sometimes to squeeze the purses of their subjects beyond the rules of moderation. But even among these, examples of such depravity are not frequent: they are, for the most part, content with the ordinary-stated income, which custom and precedents have established in their dominions.

Some of them, indeed, have given proofs of an extraordinary sense of honour and equity in pecuniary matters. Thus a Margrave of Bareith, in order to discharge the

debts incurred by his predecessor, divested himself, during the course of several years, of all courtly magnificence, and lived almost in obscurity, to husband his finances, and compass the end he had proposed, without burdening his subjects.

Among those sovereigns who have distinguished themselves by their talents, and the felicity of their government, those of the house of Brandenburg hold indisputably the principal rank. No princes have taken more pains, and laboured more successfully for their country and people. A fortunate succession of three princes, very different in their character, but who were all steady in their pursuits, concurred to fix the state, of which they were the heads, on such a basis of good order and stability as enabled the late monarch to display those talents

talents that were so deservedly the admiration of all Europe.

Frederic William, justly stiled the great elector through the whole course of a long and troublesome reign, made it his business to infuse into his countrymen that martial spirit so necessary to a nation exposed to the perpetual hostilities of ambitious, enterprising neighbours, and obliged, by its situation, to rely chiefly on itself for defence. His wars, his victories, and even his defeats, were glorious. The first he always undertook from equitable motives; the second he commonly obtained with inferior forces; and the last were accompanied with proofs of undejected fortitude, and always repaired with equal speed and skill.

His son, though far beneath him in

K point

point of genius, yet had prudence enough to follow most of his maxims, and to hearken to those who enforced them. Happily, not having the like difficulties to combat as his father, he had full leisure for attending to the improvement of the useful, and the introduction of many of the polite arts ; to both which he was a munificent patron.

But the principal event that marks his reign, and will perpetuate his memory to his descendants, is the erection of Prussia into a kingdom. By this he placed a diadem on the heads of his successors, and conferred additional rank and importance on his family.

Nor should it be forgotten, that the management and obtaining of this great point did no little credit to the politics of the

of Berlin. It shewed, that its councils were under a prudent and able direction. Whatever may have been the talents of the reigning prince, it was clear that he knew whom to trust and employ.

His successor followed at a time when it was become highly expedient to correct an improper and ruinous taste for boundless and injudicious magnificence. He accordingly exerted his characteristical talent, which was œconomy, in the most surprising manner; and proved what great things might be done with moderate finances, when wisely administered. The emperor excepted, he kept the most numerous army on foot of all his neighbours. Its peculiar discipline was the subject of admiration in all Europe, and proposed by all military judges as the most perfect model of its kind. He displayed no less ability

in every other department, watching over them all, without exception, with a keenness and vigilance that deterred all men from attempting the least malversation, and obliged every one to the strictest performance of his duty.

A king of such a character must necessarily have been very unacceptable to those many courtiers whose obsequiousness to their master proceeds from the expectation of being allowed to partake of the spoils of the public. His memory has accordingly been consigned to posterity with every aggravation of those faults that were imputed to him. Though some were unfortunately too real, yet the major part were such as did not affect his subjects, and were only felt by those who approached his person; rendering him, to say the worst, rather a disagreeable man than a bad prince.

A proof

A proof how highly he was thought of is, that notwithstanding that independency in the rules of acting, of which the German princes are so fond and jealous, the excellent effects of his sagacious ordinances and regulations, both in civil and military affairs, engaged, or rather commanded the attention of his cotemporaries, and stimulated them to a punctilious imitation of his measures. Hence, during his reign, order and regularity became, after his example, fashionable in Germany ; and many a prince modelled his household, his troops, and his expences, according to what was called the Prussian system. The chief aim and tendency of this was to abstain from all profusion, to deliver the subject from too oppressive imposts, and to save all the money that could be spared from the necessary demands of government. By this method a sufficiency was gradually provided for

extraordinary emergencies ; and by leaving people at liberty to enrich themselves, treasures were laid up for the future exigencies of the state. The punctual observance of these salutary maxims made the character of this monarch greatly respected, and the situation of his subjects as easy and prosperous as it can be supposed to have been under an absolute government. To say nothing of the beneficial consequences that resulted to the inhabitants of those countries, the sovereigns of which adopted the maxims of his administration.

The œconomical disposition of this monarch, however his foes may have stigmatised it, argued no want of generosity. He seldom, if ever, denied a just recompence to those who had a right to claim it. He regularly paid all his debts ; and though frequently harsh and ungracious in his manners,

manners, he contributed bountifully to the relief of many individuals, as well as to several useful foundations.

Among other instances of his munificence, in order to encourage a martial turn in youths of reputable families, he did two things equally judicious and beneficial to the parties concerned. The first was to institute in his principal cities academies of cadets, or young gentlemen, who were educated at his expence, and trained up in the branches of knowledge requisite for an officer. The second was to enjoin every one of his generals, to take under his patronage and tuition some youth well descended, but of slender means, and to qualify him in the completest manner for a military life. For the due performance of this provident injunction, a liberal allowance was made, and proper notice taken

of those whose pupils were the most forward, and did the most honour to their tutors.

A prince, whose whole life was spent in exertions of this kind, merits undoubtedly to be recorded as a benefactor to his country, whatever flaws may otherwise fully detract from the brightness of his character.

To him, therefore, may justly be ascribed the solid substantial power, of which his illustrious successor took possession at his demise. When he ascended the throne, in seventeen hundred thirteen, the military force of his dominions did not amount to thirty thousand men: at his death, in seventeen hundred forty, it consisted of near one hundred thousand; and they were universally esteemed the finest troops in Europe, without exception. This mighty army

army was maintained without oppressing his country: on the contrary, it flourished in arts and commerce; its people were richer than at any former period, and the public revenue was incomparably larger. But this was owing to the sagacious arrangements he was continually making, much more than to any additional application to the assistance of his subjects.

It is not then without great reason, that he was reputed the wisest prince in his time. His capacity and discernment extended equally to great and to minute occurrences. It was by embracing at once objects of the highest and slenderest importance that his comprehensive mind saw their reciprocal subserviency to each other. This happy, but rare talent, was the foundation of the prosperity with which his reign was accompanied; and by the exten-

five benefits, of which it was productive; appears indubitably the most valuable of those qualifications that are desirable in a sovereign.

CHAP.

C H A P. VII.

Causes of Emigration in Germany—Propensity of the Germans of all Ranks, to quit their Country in Search of better Fortune—Their Success in various Countries, through their Industry, Abilities, and Merit—Resolution, Perseverance, and Dexterity of the Germans, in their Enterprises—Peculiarly qualified to rise in the World—Narrow Circumstances of most of the German Gentlemen—Family Pride of the German Nobility—Their Contempt of the mercantile and trading Classes—Capriciousness of some German Princes—Evil Effects of excessive Respect for the Great—Eagerness of the Germans to be employed in the Courts of their Princes—Contrasted with the French and the English in this Particular.

LENITY, in the exercise of their respective power, is peculiarly necessary to the

the sovereigns in Germany, from the pernicious consequences with which the reverse seldom fails to be attended.

Through the contiguosity of each other's dominions, and the obvious facility of quitting them, princes are liable to lose not only the affections, but also the persons of their subjects in cases of maltreatment. This is a truth too frequently verified by those emigrations that have left some parts of Germany almost desolate, and which are, at the same time, the more detrimental to the country thus forsaken, as the loss usually consists of the most active and enterprising, and therefore the most useful members of the community. None but such have courage enough to think of encountering the hardships and variety of obstacles that usually accompany

pany an attempt to settle in a foreign country.

Experience has shewn, that emigrators are generally men of uncommon industry and perseverance. Their consciousness of these qualities is the very motive that induces them to remove from the scene of oppression, in quest of that countenance and protection which industry and a disposition to employ one's faculties to the best advantage, are sure of meeting with under a wise and equitable government.

While multitudes of the inferior and laborious classes are thus driven by ill usage to abandon their native soil, it as frequently happens, that, from the like impatience, either of real or of fancied injuries, the nobility and gentry of Germany, without the least hesitation, forsake the service of

of

of those sovereigns, at whose behaviour to them they have taken offence, in expectation of meliorating their fortune elsewhere. But what is yet more remarkable, they are no less ready, without pretending any cause of complaint, to abandon them on the slightest prospect of greater advantage.

In this they pretty much resemble the Swiss; a people irreproachable in every part of their character, excepting that indiscrimination with which they prostitute their valour for the sake of gain. An apology of some weight occurs, however, in favour of these, when we reflect that the safety of the republic, which is unable of itself to maintain large standing armies, partly authorises this policy; as from the great number of their countrymen, in the pay of more opulent nations, they are always sure, upon any emergency, to be supplied

plied with experienced officers and troops, and thus reap that advantage of war in a state of profound peace.

In the same manner persons of ability throughout Germany are too much at the command of the highest bidder, and profess very little attachment to their native sovereigns, or even to their own country.

The German princes are so thoroughly sensible of this, that they make no difficulty in bestowing their confidence and favour upon any native of the empire indiscriminately, and are very far from restricting their choice to those born within their own dominions. Many of the principal personages in the different courts are absolutely strangers there in point of birth and family connections. The celebrated Count Fleming, prime minister to Frederic Augustus,

gustus, king of Poland, and elector of Saxony, was born a subject of Brandenburg. Count Wartemberg, a long time the noted favourite of Frederic, the first king of Prussia, was a Palatine.

Though such a disposition of mind may be favourable to emulation in the improvement and exertion of genius and capacity, yet it cannot fail to extinguish the spirit of patriotism, by creating an indifference for persons and places, which gradually terminates in selfishness and venality.

Few People abandon their country with less reluctance than the Germans. Pecuniary views, religious persecutions, and flights from domestic troubles and miseries, have, during the two last centuries, drained Germany of a prodigious number of its inhabitants. The lower classes in particular

particular furnish a perpetual supply to the united provinces of the Netherlands. These had long ago, from various causes, been depopulated, were it not for this unceasing influx of foreign multitudes, whose indigence and laboriousness render them of immediate utility to that industrious and provident state.

Ambition as often leads the better sort abroad in search of honour and promotion. As they are commonly men of daring dispositions, they leave no methods untried to arrive at the highest preferments, careless of the danger attending the means of their exaltation, and resolutely intent to procure and maintain it at all events. Thus it was the famous Baron Goertz obtained the favour of Charles the Twelfth of Sweden, in whose right he governed that kingdom in such a manner as cost him his life.

L

Thus,

Thus, in our own times, the equally-noted Baron Neuhoff aspired at no less than a diadem ; the temporary possession of which served only to embitter the calamities and distresses of every denomination which that unhappy gentleman seemed, as it were, peculiarly fated to encounter.

Others have been more successful ; and by contenting themselves with less elevated stations, have enjoyed them with greater security,

Impartiality requires it, in the mean time, to be acknowledged, that none of those princes and states, in whose service they have been employed, have had cause to repent the trust reposed in their abilities. Their character stands high in every European nation for fidelity, as well as for valour. Many of the first potentates have

chosen their chief commanders out of officers of the German nation. The republics of Venice, and of the seven United Provinces, the latter particularly, have long testified the highest predilection in their favour. Their best generals came from Germany. Other countries have been no less indebted for their military successes, to the courage and capacity of the natives of the empire. France, for instance, never will forget its obligations to the great Marshal Saxe, the only general who sustained effectually the reputation of its arms in the war preceding the two last. Neither will England ever lose the remembrance of the victorious commander of her armies in Germany, Prince Ferdinand of Brunswic.

The Germans possess, in a peculiar degree, that highly useful art in men of the world, of reconciling a bold and resolute

spirit with a pliancy of temper, and a suppleness of behaviour, according as their interest requires they should assume either of these different characters. From this well-timed dexterity in the management of their concerns, they derive that permanency of good fortune which attends them so remarkably through the variety of trials which their restless pursuits of high promotions engage them in.

No country in Europe furnishes so many examples of individuals making their way through difficulties, by dint of patience in waiting for occasions to make a timely use of their abilities. Sensible that these are ineffectual, without the intervention of favourable accidents, they beware of all hurry and precipitation, and reserve themselves with a calm and composed vigilance for the arrival of those events, which, by

discernment and diligence, are converted into fortunate opportunities; and without the co-operation of which the greatest capacity must fail.

In the mean time, as their fortunes are commonly very circumscribed, care is taken to give them the advantages of such an education as may completely fit them to answer the views proposed in their favour. They are not only instructed in literature, but sent betimes abroad to learn the world by travelling, not as men possess of afflu-
ence, but as individuals who seek to im-
prove themselves by acquiring that various
kind of knowledge which every country
affords to the attentive part of mankind.

It is no new observation, that the Germans are the most diligent of all travellers in their examination of what is deserving

of curiosity in all places, and that they bestow, in particular, uncommon pains in studying the languages and politics of the countries they visit.

By exertions of this kind they render their travels highly profitable, and obtain a stock of knowledge and experience equally useful and ornamental in the track which they mean to pursue.

Thus accomplished, they return to their country with a well-grounded hope and confidence of gratifying those expectations of rising and making a figure in the world, which their assiduous cares have given them a right to form.

In addition to this plan of education, which is steadily pursued by all who can any ways afford it, and of which the benefits

fits are so apparent, they are endued with that firmness of soul which foresees, and is not deterred by obstructions. They conduct their undertakings with an obstinacy that lays no disappointments to heart, and continue unshaken in their determinations in spite of repeated discouragements. Hence, after a long exertion of constancy and perseverance in any project, should all their endeavours prove fruitless, and no probability remain of their meeting with success from that quarter to which their first prospects were directed, as their inclinations are wedded to no spot or set, they shift the scene of action without the least repugnance, and proceed to a recommencement of their primitive plan with unabated alacrity. In consequence of this undependency, this mental vigour, that never loses hope, they seldom fail to overcome all

obstacles, and soon or late complete the execution of their designs.

A tenaciousness of their original aims is so deeply rooted in their minds, that when, from the consciousness of their superior endowments, they have indulged themselves in the most ambitious prospects, they are amazingly firm and unremitting in their efforts, and sanguine in the expectations to compass their ends. What is no less observable, singular, and romantic, as this frame of mind may appear, they generally find their account in it.

Most of the German gentlemen are what the French very pertinently call, *soldats de fortune*, soldiers of fortune, or more properly, hunters of preferment. It is not, therefore, surprising they should eagerly watch, and readily seise the minutest opportunity.

portunities of bettering their condition. This no individuals whatever can stand a fairer chance of doing, as they are not difficult to please, and willing to accept of any offer, however small the lucre, provided the employment be genteel. Hence it is the German armies are so full of persons of birth, and that the slenderest military offices have often been gladly embraced, as the sole means of subsistence and support, by many whose merit has, in process of time, raised them to the highest preferments in their profession.

A narrowness of circumstances attends, indeed, not only most of the German nobility and gentry, but even not a few of their petty princes. Several of them have sometimes been driven to the same shifts in order to maintain their state and grandeur, and, perhaps, to mend the breaches in

in their income, occasioned by the extravagance of their predecessors, or their own, as inferior individuals have recourse to for the preservation of their credit, or to repair their shattered fortunes. Thus alienations and mortgages are no very rare transactions in some of these courts. Hence, too, that grand restorer of disordered affairs, a wealthy bride, is sought after with no little solicitude. Though Germanic pride will not stoop to one of ignoble origin, yet they who are penurious will, in favour of an ample dowry, act with extraordinary condescension, and gloss over many considerations that would appear very offensive to their haughtiness, if they were in a condition to indulge it. Even to those who are in affluence, a rich wife is no indifferent object; and few German princes, if any, care to marry without a large portion.

If

If sovereigns are led by such motives, well may their principal subjects follow the example ; and this is done accordingly in the fullest latitude. As these are not bound by the same restrictions, their choice has a larger field to range in. They readily, therefore, and seldom unsuccessfully, pay their addresses to the opulent heiresses in the commercial classes, who seem in Germany less apt than elsewhere to reject the suit of a man adorned with honourable appellations. Yet such is the prepossession in favour of descent and pedigree, that, notwithstanding the wife of a man under the degree of a prince, though beneath him in point of birth, is allowed to bear his title, she must lay it to her account, if her parentage be obscure, to meet with endless slights and mortifications from those ladies who happen to be better born. This ill-natured arrogance is often carried so far as

to

to refuse her admittance into their circles and assemblies, to shun her very acquaintance, and even to deny her the common civilities of salutation and polite notice in any accidental intercourse.

The absurdity of these family prejudices is certainly carried to a greater height in Germany than in any other country in Europe: so far, that if a person of princely birth marries a lady of a rank inferior to that of countess, he gives her his left hand in the nuptial ceremony; and the intervention of the emperor himself is necessary to enable their posterity to inherit their honours and estates. Nor can this be done but by formally creating her a princess of the empire; otherwise the match remains disgraceful, and the wife is not even allowed to bear the husband's name.

This

This ridiculous haughtiness is an incurable disease in most parts of Germany, where a person's merit seldom gets the better of his want of illustrious blood in the apprehensions of the generality. Not only the vulgar, but also the more decent classes are entirely tamed into a mean-spirited reverence of their superiors for this accidental advantage. Even wealth itself, however considerable, must not pretend to enter the lists of competition with it.

Attentive travellers have frequently observed, that of all European nations the Dutch are least respected among the Germans, as being a people of mere traders, wholly taken up with the pursuits of a mercantile life, and avid only of gain. Notwithstanding the immense opulence of many individuals of that republic, they meet with no deference on that account when-

whenever they happen to be in Germany, unless it be from those who may have formed designs on their money. All other persons of any rank treat them without ceremony, and are even forward to let them understand how little they value a merely commercial character, however supported by riches, and in how slender an estimation they hold their countrymen in spite of their vast opulence.

This uncivil usage of a nation, of which the Germans have certainly no right to complain, and of whose finances many of them frequently stand in need, is too common even among Germans of superior understanding: but they are hurried away by the torrent of prepossession that induces them to undervalue all rank not founded on birth, or on military or intellectual merit. That which a man claims in virtue

ture of his superior wealth they positively refuse to admit, and are even violent in venting their indignation and contempt upon such as presume to assume the character of persons of consequence on that account.

Hence it is that merchants and men of business, however extensive and useful it may be to society, and however respectable for their professional knowledge, their industry, affluence, and integrity, are still considered as individuals of small importance among those whose names are graced with some titular appendages, from the gilded premier who basks in the sun-shine of favour, to the needy gentleman who bears indigence patiently, in hopes of preferment, and regularly attends in the mean time at the distribution of his master's forage: a practice that sufficiently shows the

the poverty of those who accept of such a donation.

Well may these, however, comfort themselves with expectations of rising in their turn ; as it has been occasionally among them, that no few of the German princes, in some of their capricious fits, have thought proper to chuse their favourites.

Neither, indeed, need any of their courtiers be apprehensive of a deficiency of talents to fill adequately so brilliant a post. A dexterity in horsemanship, in the use of arms, or some other accomplishment of that kind, or even of much inferior stamp, such as chess, cards, or dice, has more than once attracted the notice, and procured the benevolence of a sovereign, and proved of more efficacy in the advancement of their fortunes

fortunes than the most valuable qualifications would, in all likelihood, have done.

Thus, by playing skilfully at chess, a gentleman of the name of Kamk insinuated himself into the good graces of Frederic, the first king of Prussia. This monarch, whose inconstant disposition induced him to appoint and dismiss persons in office without much hesitation, was so captivated with this new favourite, that he discarded an old servent on very slight pretences, in order to give his employment to the former; by whose suggestions the court of that prince long was governed.

In much the same manner had the constable of Luines, the minion of Lewis the Thirteenth of France, made his way to greatness, by his complete skill in sports-

M manship,

manship, and by initiating his master in the diversions of the field.

Such passages remind one of the story told of a Turkish emperor, who conferred an eminent post upon one of his gardeners, to reward his dexterity in planting cabbages.

Though instances of this species of folly are not, as it appears, unknown elsewhere, yet they are much more frequent in Germany, from the multiplicity of odd characters in a country where sovereigns abound; many of whom render themselves remarkable through a fondness and affectation of singularities.

It ought, however, to be duly noticed, that in the midst of these fanciful indulgences the German princes are usually not
apt

apt to lose sight of their more substantial concerns. These are generally entrusted to expert hands, and seldom sacrificed to the injudicious management of the mere instruments of their amusements. Such even as are most addicted to their pleasures have commonly reason enough to consult their honour and interest in essential concerns.

Men of a contemplative and philosophical cast are often prone to complain, that mankind too readily bends before individuals possessed of power, and by the humility, or rather the adulation, of their behaviour, fill their superiors with much higher notions of their importance than they would entertain, were no farther homage paid to them than is absolutely requisite to render their stations and persons respectable in the eye of the community.

Certain it is, that an unnecessary measure of that reverential awe which is due to lawful authority is equally pernicious to those who give and to those who receive it. It degrades the former by depressing their minds, and lowering the opinion which human nature has a right to entertain of its dignity and rights. It lifts the latter above the condition which was meant to be assigned to them. They gradually, and almost imperceptibly, learn to undervalue, and at last to despise those who pay them such boundless homage. Excessive respect is therefore no less injurious to mankind than unworthy of their character, and tends evidently to corrupt the best dispositions in those who are appointed to rule over them.

The rigorous inculcators of these nations, and especially the abettors of the re-

publican

publican ideas of equality, cannot fail, therefore, to be highly offended at the prodigious deference and veneration that sovereignty meets with in Germany, much beyond what is seen in most other parts of Europe.

The natives of the empire, those only excepted who belong to the imperial and free cities, are uncommonly submissive and respectful to their various sovereigns. Seldom, if ever, do they shew the least propensity to oppose their will. Acquiescence in their measures, and obsequiousness to their commands, is what they universally and readily profess.

They hold it at the same time no inconsiderable a distinction to be employed in some manner about the persons of their princes. All individuals, whose condition,

circumstances, or capacity, are above the common level, strenuously endeavour to recommend themselves to their notice and esteem, in order to obtain a share of their trust, and participate in the management of their affairs.

In this particular the Germans sympathise greatly with the French; most of whom that are able to purchase or procure it are very desirous of being distinguished by exercising some function at court.

Herein it is observable, that they both widely differ from the English, who, of all Europeans, testify the most avowed indifference to such promotions, any farther than they may conduce to their immediate support or interest. The distinction which such advancements may confer is what they least value; whereas it is, on the contrary,

trary, the gratification resulting to their vanity from the possession of such employments that principally stimulates both the French and the Germans in the uncommon pains they take in order to arrive at them.

1100

111

C H A P. VIII.

Of the lower Classes in Germany—Of some German Customs — German Literati — State of Arts, Learning, and Literature, in Germany — Ridiculous Opinions lately current among the Germans — Superstitious Notions and Practices still prevalent in many Parts of Germany — Credulous Disposition of the Germans — Odd Usages in some Places of Germany.

THE inferior classes in Germany, though far from deficient in solid substantial sense, yet are, in many respects, what the French have justly enough styled them, *épais et matériels*, dull and heavy.

The reciprocal intercourse between individuals, even when convened with an intent

tent

tent to relaxation, has little of that intellectual festivity which, in some nations, is the very life of social meetings. The usual subjects of their conversation are the result of the current business of the day, and turn too much on those incidents that arise from the speaker's profession to afford entertainment to such as have no connection with it. Topics of this nature, with such as are produced by the public transactions of the times, and accompanied with plentiful compotations, seasoned occasionally with some bacchanalian mirth, generally constitute their convivial recreations.

This custom of excessive carousing was formerly thought conducive to a much better purpose than merely to procure jollity and merriment to the living only. The dead also were imagined to receive thereby some

some advantage—an opinion that was once prevalent in no few districts of Germany.

Strange conceits and practices have, in the succession of ages, prevailed not only among the rude and barbarous, but even the enlightened nations. Some of the most civilised people of old used to bring forth the images of their deceased friends, by way of commemorating the joys they had formerly partaken in their company. The Aborigines of America at this day go much farther, and produce the very carcases and skeletons of their departed relations and familiars in the solemn feasts and festivals, which are publicly held at stated periods in order to perpetuate their remembrance. In some parts of Spain they conclude interments with a refreshment and a song, the burden of which is, *viva el muerto*, long live the dead. There are also particular days

days and occasions in England whereon we drink to the memory of celebrated names. It remained for the Germans to adopt the notion, that the dead could derive benefit from a copious consumption of liquor by the living.

The politer sort of people in Germany are frequently not much less guilty of intemperance in their cups than the lower—a vice unhappily too general among all conditions and degrees. Both high and low are almost equally addicted to it. Even the literati, who, in most other countries, are professed votaries of sobriety, cannot, in this drinking region, resist the torrent of example.

These latter form a numerous body in Germany, where that species of learning, which consists in a superficial acquaintance with,

with, and inelegant use of the Latin tongue, is common, and diffused throughout the lowest stations.

The fact is, that Germany is in a manner overrun with what the world is usually pleased to term scholars ; most of whom would undoubtedly have made a much more advantageous figure, and have been of more utility to the community, as well as to themselves, in any other situation whatsoever.

This inundation of scholarship, if one may so express it, proceeds from the facility of receiving a classical education, and the consequent unaptitude, or rather unwillingness, in most individuals, to apply themselves to any calling of a different cast, after having expended the prime of life in academical studies, and contracted, through length

length of time, that peculiar habit of mind which they occasion.

Hence no country is more largely stocked with authors, or, to speak with more propriety, with dealers in bookish knowledge ; men whose voluminous compilations may not improperly be considered as immense magazines of erudition, collected for the use of persons of genius, as labourers prepare materials to be employed under the direction of artists.

It is, indeed, highly deserving of observation, that no country in Europe contains so many universities as Germany, amounting to near forty ; and that with so many helps, the natives, though forming incomparably the most populous nation in Europe, have hitherto exhibited none of those superior

superior specimens of wit that have been produced in other countries.

France, Italy, Spain, and England, have given to the world some compositions of the first-rate merit in the line of original genius, while those of Germany are yet to come.

Such as have appeared of late years, though excellent in their kind, cannot, however, be classed with the great productions of the above-mentioned people, and claim evidently but a second place in the opinion of all the rest of Europe.

But the very great ardour with which the Germans now cultivate their language, promises that, in due time, it will also afford its share of masterpieces. The long neglect to which it has been condemned for

for ages, and the sole use of the Latin tongue by the literati during that period, stifled the exertions to bring it forward, which were occasionally made. Better hopes are now entertained from the emulation with which the Germans have perused the performances of those modern nations that have flourished in literature. The progress already made leaves no doubt of their becoming at last no less successful in the same career.

The Germans are great readers, and there is no nation upon earth more capable of, and more addicted to, the most intense application. Hence they have always remarkably succeeded in those studies that require much labour and patience, and in those profound disquisitions wherein there is more exercise for the judgement than the imagination. They excel in mathematics and

and in experimental learning, such as physic, botany, chymistry, and in all the numerous branches of natural philosophy.

Nor are they less eminent in jurisprudence and the knowledge of civil law. Herein they are the most conversant of all the Europeans, and have shone more conspicuously than any modern nation since the decline of the Roman empire.

In the science of history and antiquity they yield to no people, and especially in the composition of laborious comments upon classical authors, in the elucidation of whom their industry and patience are indefatigable.

It were to be wished, that to the extraordinary diligence, with which they apply to these various objects, they would add a

proportionable measure of vivacity in the style and manner. It is here they are principally deficient. Their language is correct, and their reflections judicious; but they adhere so closely to the subjects they treat of, which are most frequently of a dry, unattractive nature to the generality of readers, that people of a lively turn soon grow tired of their performances.

They forget that it is owing purely to the skill with which able writers enliven treatises of such a nature, that they are able to procure them readers, as the mere knowledge of the facts they contain is seldom interesting to individuals, or of any importance to society. But this is a truth to which few German commentators seem to pay attention. Their ardour in the explanation of things of little, if any, moment, is often as great as if they were of

the highest consequence; to which, when insipidity of method is superadded, we are not ~~apt~~ to be surprised they should so frequently afford neither instruction nor amusement.

Notwithstanding these deficiencies, it would be highly unjust not to acknowledge, that the capacity of the Germans is uncommonly strong and useful in solid and material points. Their imagination, if not so graceful and pleasing as that of some other people, is fertile and inventive in the most extensive degree. Their comprehension is clear, and their penetration deep. They view objects with a piercing ken, if one may so express it. Though they are too apt to dwell upon needless circumstances, and to swell into a tedious redundancy, whoever will submit to accompany them patiently through the length of the

road they may think proper to lead him, will usually find himself abundantly rewarded at his journey's end.

Nor should we forget that Germany is the undoubted soil where some of the most celebrated discoveries have been produced in latter ages. The arts of printing and gunnery had their birth in this country, as well as several others ; such, for instance, as the divers methods of engraving, which were either invented there, or first reduced to utility.

In all these, as well as the polite arts of painting, architecture, and music, the Germans make a respectable figure even among the most expert. They were, during the middle ages, esteemed as complete architects as any in Europe. The durability of their edifices is particularly remarkable, as well

well as their spaciousness, and the ingenuity of their contrivance. Their painters have been so numerous and eminent as to have constituted a school inferior, in the opinion of some, to none but the Italian. In music their talents are highly valued. The name of a Handel stands on a par with that of a Corelli, and in some countries above it.

It is rather surprising that, with so decided an aptitude for such of the fine arts as fall under the eye and ear, they should so long have remained in a state of inferiority to their neighbours, in those that relate to wit and fancy. It is only of late they have began to emerge, for which no cause appears assignable but that already hinted, the neglect during so long a time to cultivate and polish their own language.

What the Germans seem chiefly to aim at in their undertakings, is the surprising, or the prodigious. Many of their mechanical productions are of the former kind. This is a branch in which they have for ages been the most noted of all Europeans. In the second kind they claim no less notice. The famous tun at Heidelberg is a striking instance of their turn for devices of this nature. A tub capable of containing two hundred tons of wine was a fabrication no less stupendous for the purpose intended, than the idea itself was unaccountably strange and original.

In their literary enterprises they seem no less intent upon extending them to an enormous size, as if the quantity were designed to shield the quality of the performance, and as if the immensity of a work constituted the principal merit of a writer, and conferred

conferred the most substantial title to learning and reputation.

Among the vast collections of books that fill the German libraries, none make so considerable an appearance as their law tracts, sprung from the endless variety of regulations that have necessarily taken place in a country where there are so many sovereigns and states entitled to frame them. They form accordingly a *corpus juris* truly formidable and tremendous, such a body of laws as would astonish, and almost deter from their perusal, men less resolute in their application to this study than the Germans.

It is not, however, without adequate encouragement, that they bestow such infinite pains on this branch of knowledge. The courts of judicature in Germany fur-

nish a world of occupation to the lawyers, the most lucrative of all liberal professions in the empire. Every prince and independent state are most perseveringly watchful and jealous of their innumerable rights, privileges, and prerogatives. To support the most trivial of which, (and these are not a few,) as well as the most material, no litigation is esteemed too tedious or expensive.

Exclusive of that knowledge and learning, of which the objects are visible and certain, no people in Europe have dealt more profoundly in lucubrations of an imaginary nature than the Germans. Till within this century many, who were in other respects no contemptible scholars, have gone deep into cabalistical speculations. Some seriously studied judicial astrology ; others firmly believed the existence

of

of genii, as well as the reality and frequency of apparitions.

Of late years a very extraordinary opinion was broached, and learnedly maintained by some of the remaining members of those credulous fraternities. This was, that the dead sometimes came out of their graves to suck the blood of the living. This ridiculous idea, which possibly was occasioned by the disorder called the incubus, or night mare, spread over all Germany; from whence it found its way into the neighbouring countries. It went under the denomination of vampirism; and incredible was the number of elaborate dissertations it occasioned in several of the most polite and enlightened nations in Europe. The French themselves did not escape the infection, and several books were written among them on the subject. It remained

mained during some years uncommonly popular and interesting, and afforded one of the many proofs how readily the grossest absurdities can obtain admittance and belief even among people otherwise sensible and judicious ; and what is more surprising, in an age when mankind is daily shaking off the superstition of centuries, and making rapid strides towards a complete liberty of thinking.

And yet, with all this readiness and warmth in adopting idle notions, the Germans are esteemed much less tenacious and obstinate in spiritual matters than formerly, or than many or most of their neighbours. It has even been said, that, in some places, a young woman is now told in the plainest terms, on her marrying a man of a different persuasion from that wherein she has been educated, that henceforth she must conform

form to the religion of her husband — an evident proof that, to persons of such a way of thinking, it must appear a thing of no consequence which of the two was professed.

Such maxims, it may be added, would have saved much controversy and confusion, and prevented the effusion of much blood within the two last centuries in many parts of Europe.

But if there is such a freedom and latitude of thought in some of the people of Germany, certain it is, on the other hand, that superstition is far from being on the decline every where.*

Among other demonstrations of the fervour with which the tenets originating from ignorance and debility of understanding are still embraced and maintained, the devotion to the host flourishes in many parts

parts of Germany at this day with unabated implicitness of belief in what the Romish divines have asserted on this matter. It is particularly worth notice, that this devotion is the more fervent in the dominions of the house of Austria, as the princes of that family are thought, by their good subjects, to owe their temporal aggrandisement to their piety in this respect. Many instances of it are cited with great applause, especially that of Rodolphus, the first of that house who attained to the imperial dignity. Tradition says, that while count of Hapsburgh only, meeting with a priest on foot, who was carrying the viaticum to a sick person, he alighted from his horse and made him mount. The priest, it is added, prophetically inspired, predicted to him, as a reward for this pious action, his future grandeur and that of his descendants. This

story

Story is often in the mouth of the devout well-wishers to the Austrian line ; and pictures of it are frequent both in public places, and in private dwellings. The example of this emperor has often been followed by several of his posterity, as well as by other Romish sovereigns, to the great edification of their people.

In Bohemia, one of the principal dependencies of this family, and where its religious zeal has been not a little experienced, a saint is worshipped at this hour who makes as great a figure at Prague, the metropolis of that kingdom, as our Thomas a Becket did of old at Canterbury, and who works miracles enow to compose a very curious legend. His name is Nepomuc, and he bids fair, by the rich presents he receives from all quarters in that country,

to

to become in time as wealthy as the *Ma-donna of Lorretto*.

Neither is Germany wanting in miraculous images of the latter, nor in relics of the most extraordinary kind. Such as the remains of the three kings, or wise men, preserved with great care and veneration at Cologne ; and that rare assemblage of sacred curiosities at Aix la Chapelle, which, at certain periods, draws so vast a concourse of pilgrims from the remotest parts of Germany. To say nothing of the wonderful consecration of the cathedral of that city, at which saints rose from their tombs to assist, according to accounts reputed authentic by multitudes ; nor of the sword of state brought from Heaven to Charlemain, like the celestial shields formerly sent down to Numa Pompilius, and which figures among the imperial regalia, as still does

does among the French, at Rheims in Champain, the holy vial of oil, which was also a present from above in the days of yore, to anoint the kings of France at their coronation.

Many other instances of bigotry in Germany might be enumerated, such as a celebrated chapel somewhere in the Austrian districts, endowed with so many spiritual privileges, that a single mass said in it is sufficient to deliver a soul out of purgatory. Not to forget their torches of lighted wood, blessed and carried about as preservatives against fire and lightning; nor their ridiculously pious salutations of each other at certain annual festivals; to which it is not so amazing that indulgences should be annexed, considering how cheaply they are obtained, as that so sensible a man as Pope

Clement

Clement the Eleventh should have been
their institutor.

The patronage of a number of saints is no less remarkable a peculiarity among those of the Romish communion in Germany, whose belief and trust in the supernatural influence of these invisible agents induces them to claim their protection, by assuming a multitude of their names. Thus it is not uncommon for one individual to be provided with ten or a dozen names of saints ; the festal days of which he solemnises with much punctuality, and loses no opportunity of testifying his respect for those inhabitants of Heaven. In return, he relies not a little upon their interest in the prosecution of all his affairs, both spiritual and temporal ; as often, perhaps, applying to them for their guidance and in-

spiration

spiration of proper measures in his worldly, as in his religious concerns.

Some, indeed, have thought this supposed communication between mankind, and the spirits of such as are deemed in possession of a happier state of existence, a notion highly deserving of encouragement. They imagine that a man, from the less degree of dread and awe that he feels for beings, who were once in the same condition as himself, will probably have the more frequent recourse to them, and in consequence make their lives and actions his study and the patterns of his imitation.

But they who argue in this manner may, with great truth, be answered, that an improper, and often a disrespectful, familiarity attends the behaviour of the client to his patrons, in his perpetual demand of

their assistance, not unfrequently on the most trivial, and possibly on unwarrantable occasions. That this imaginary intercourse is apt to create and cherish a supineness and indolence in the essential concerns of religion, by inducing men to pay less attention to its most material and important precepts, than to the trifling duties, they have imposed upon themselves, by way of securing the favour of those whom they have been taught to consider in the light of protectors — the scrupulous exactness that usually accompanies the observance of these contemptible injunctions seldom failing to abate their assiduity and care in the discharge of more weighty obligations.

In this article of their devotion many of the Germans of the Romish persuasion behave with the utmost preposterousness. Their churches, their houses, and their

prayer books, are crowded with tasteless representations of their celestial patrons ; for which they express a respect, or rather a fondness, approaching to puerility. Some even go farther, and as a token of their attachment and predilection, wear the picture of their favourite saint appendant to their neck, or fastened to a button-hole with a ribband, like some of the minor orders of knighthood. Several even of the better sort are not guiltless of these foceries. Notwithstanding the intermixture of Protestants and the public toleration of their opinions, and consequently the opportunities of being cured of such absurdities, still they are occasionally practised with almost as much servility as in the most bigoted Romish countries.

To this excess of superstition in the invocation of their saints, one may add their

O 2 notorious

notorious susceptibility of belief in those pious forgeries, calculated by men of more simplicity than wisdom to serve religious purposes, but which in reality are only proper to excite laughter and derision. Thus, among other silly tales, that of Hatto, bishop of Ments, reported to have been devoured by rats for his cruelty to the poor, is asserted by many with a positiveness that cannot brook the least contradiction or doubt of the fact. The expulsion of that vermin, from a certain province by a relation of St. Hubert, is held equally unquestionable by numbers.

Credulity, however, seems an epidemic disease in Germany. Even in Brandenburgh, a Protestant country, the ghost of an old woman, who was disengaged by an elector of that house some centuries ago, has, they say, infested his posterity

ever

ever since, and usually haunts their palaces by way of signal on their approaching death. This absurd notion is treated with more seriousness than is credible. It is well known that the death of the first king of Prussia was accelerated by a sudden fright, occasioned by the sight, as he for the moment thought, of an apparition, clad in white, the phantom's reputed habit. This proved to be his queen, whose mind was disordered, and who burst into his apartment, and waked him with great roughness and violence, as he sat slumbering in a chair.

The fact is, that, notwithstanding the phlegmatic disposition which preserves the Germans from being easily imposed upon in the ordinary occurrences of life, and which, one might reasonably suppose, would have the like effect on other emer-

gencies, they still harbour a surprising willingness to admit the probability of astonishing and marvellous events.

From this fund of absurdity they derive an aptitude to indulge in the most irrational conceits. Witness that institution of Friars somewhere in Bavaria during the last century, who are obliged by their statutes not only to depend for subsistence on public generosity, without soliciting it, as other mendicant orders are allowed to do, but even in cases of the utmost want, to wait three entire days before they give notice of their distress.

A practice no less ridiculous, but to which was superadded a measure of guilt that rendered it infamous, was long customary on the coasts of Germany bordering on the ocean. When storms arose at sea

the inhabitants were used to put up public
prayers, that such vessels as were to be
wrecked might be driven upon their shores,
in order to benefit by the plunder of them.

This horrid custom subsisted within the
present century, and did not cease until
prohibited by the government under severe
penalties.

It has also happened sometimes, that the oddity and apparent whimsicalness of some usages have been designed for political ends. It is an established rule in one of the principal cathedral chapters in Germany, for every person, before he is admitted a member, to be scourged with rods on his bare back by the canons, ranged in two rows for that purpose. Thus he may be fairly said to run the gauntlet for his preferment.

This ceremony, it may well be pre-

sumed, was first invented in order to deter persons belonging to sovereign houses from being desirous of obtaining prebends in this church. Such an exclusion preserves an equality among the members of the chapter, and enables them, on a vacancy of the see, to exercise more freedom in the choice of a successor. This might not be the case were princes to become part of their body.

CHAP. **CHAP.**

CHAP. **CHAP.**

CHAP. **CHAP.**

C H A P. IX.

Germany, a Country full of Prejudices—Instances of many—Arrogance of the Peasantry in some Parts—Their excessive Servility and Abjectness in most others—Harsh Treatment of them by their Masters—Submissiveness of the Germans to the Will and Pleasure of their Sovereigns—Remarkable Humour of a German Prince—Subserviency and Passiveness of Behaviour in the Germans, much against their natural Inclination.

THREE is no country in Europe wherein men differ more from each other than in Germany by the respective contradiction of their opinions, their manners, and their pursuits.

Local influences are no where more visible

ble than in this extensive country. Prejudices of the most preposterous, as well as noxious tendency, infect the minds of the natives, according as their systems of government happen to differ.

Some of these I call to support — you to

In those places where princes rule and nobility abounds, nothing else is prized. Trades, and the reputable occupations of civil life, are held in contempt. The learned professions are disregarded, and even the exercise of magistracy itself is looked upon as disgraceful.

Such a watchfulness prevails among those of noble descent, to monopolise all honour and dignity to themselves, that as employments merely lucrative must not, on that very account, be accepted by persons of birth, under pain of degradation, they have, in order to comfort themselves for so mortifying

tifying an exclusion, fixed a mark of infamy on every kind of business that may be followed by what they call a man of no birth.

The same sort of pride actuates their very ecclesiastics in a degree unknown in any other part of Christendom. In most, if not all, of their episcopal chapters, and in many others, both male and female, proofs of nobility, and that of no recent date, are rigidly required before admission. There are even abbeys of Monks, where the like qualifications are insisted upon in such as are desirous of entering into the fraternity; and few of their great convents, either of men or of women, will accept of an abbot or abbess, the nobleness of whose pedigree is not well ascertained.

This haughtiness of blood often occasions

sions very serious altercations, and is not unfrequently so violent and fierce, that, on public solemnities, instances have been known of rivals breaking through all decorum, and disturbing the peace of the assembly, sooner than make the most trifling concession on either side. Sometimes it has happened that superior bodily strength has determined the contest. Thus a count of Nassau Weilbourg, at the coronation of an emperor, took precedence by main force of a prince of Taxis, whose title, though loftier, was inferior to his own in point of antiquity. At other times the decision has not been so brief, and competitors have withdrawn to settle matters with the point of their swords.

The high value of ancestry is so inconceivably rooted in the character and maxims of some of the German courts, that, in the rewards

rewards they bestow, and the distinctions they confer upon individuals, their sole origin often prescribes the measure of the first, and settles the degree of the last. They seem, in short, fully persuaded, that merit cannot be complete, unless its owner be honourably descended. Thus, among a multitude of instances, when the emperor Leopold created the great Duke of Marlborough a prince of the empire, his noble pedigree was carefully and circumstantially mentioned in the patent as a considerable inducement; though certainly his actions were sufficiently illustrious to eclipse all other motives, and had his birth been ever so plebeian and mean, still rendered him so truly and intrinsically great, as to set him far above the necessity of concealing it.

In the mean time, if the German grantees are, on the one hand, so wondrously in-

fatuated

fatuated with the ideas of dignity annexed to their rank, there is, on the other, a class of people dispersed in various parts of the empire, who, in a very opposite station of life, entertain equal notions of their own importance. Strange to tell, these are the peasants of some of those happy districts appertaining to the imperial and free cities, or who, though acknowledging the sovereignty over them of some prince, have yet found means to retain such privileges and franchises as enable them to escape oppression, and to enjoy the fruits of their labour.

These are a tribe of mortals who affect to be the very reverse of those haughty-minded nobles above described, and profess no esteem or respect for any but pecuniary merit. Hence the drift of their whole lives is to amass immense hoards of money; of which

which they make the most insulting parade, whenever they find themselves in the presence, or hearing of title-bearers, the poverty of whose finances forms but a sorry contrast to their high pretensions. These are the perpetual butts of their sarcasms, and undergo the most unmerciful trials of patience, whenever ill luck condemns them to have any intercourse with these opulent and presumptuous rustics.

Such, indeed, is the unaccountable vanity and astonishing prepossession of this proud peasantry in favour of their personal and intrinsic worth, as to esteem it an indignity to their character to enter into any family alliance out of the pale of their own condition. Thus they all intermarry in order to preserve the breed unmixed, to remain on a level with each other, and to transmit to their descendants, together with their

their fortunes, (which are generally very considerable, and center by these means entirely among themselves) no other kind of funds from whence to derive any consideration.

Far different, however, from these are the other boors in most parts of Germany. The despicable servility of their deportment strongly evinces the wretched depression of mind ; that is the consequence of extreme servitude. So humbly, not to say contemptibly, do they think of themselves, that, on the least verbal intercourse with their masters, or any one their superior, they study, as it were, to express the deepest sense of their inferiority by the most abject submissiveness in their personal demeanor. Of all the peasants in Germany, none deserve so much to be stigmatised on this account as those of Bohemia.

Till

Till the regulations lately introduced into that kingdom by the present emperor, their circumstances and treatment were the worst of all the German peasants. Notwithstanding the ordinances enacted in their favour, it will require, probably, many years before the consequences and traces of slavery are tolerably effaced among them.

This self-humiliation and pusillanimity of the low classes is, in the mean time, no small encouragement to the haughtiness and severity with which so many of the German nobility and gentry treat their rustic dependants. By chastising them unreasonably for slight faults, they harden their bodies and stupify their minds to such a degree, and so much accustom them to an expectation of harsh usage, as often to render them insensible to any other motives

P for

for obedience but such as are enforced with ill-nature and unfeelingness.

But while the grandees indulge themselves in this tyranny over their vassals, they are not undeservedly punished for it in the boundless deference and unreserved compliance which they who mean to rise into favour are obliged to profess for the will and pleasure of their respective sovereigns. These, though abundantly civil and condescending in their behaviour, still remember their power is absolute, and are apt enough to exert occasionally a great deal of arbitrariness. However insignificant in point of dominion, they expect as much homage and implicit obedience as the greatest potentates; and are no less imperious in exacting unlimited acquiescence and complaisance in whatever conduces to gratify their disposition and humour.

A late prince in Germany carried his capriciousness, in this respect, so far, as to betray the utmost antipathy to whatever might create him the least uneasiness. This foible was so well known, and the effects of it so much apprehended by all who approached him, that none but his jester (a species of beings still subsisting in some of the German courts) durst assume the liberty of conveying to his knowledge any disagreeable news ; and this he was forced to do in the most cautious and guarded manner, and rather by way of pleasantry than information.

This anecdote is similar to what is recorded of a king of France, Philip the Fifth, who grew so outrageous at the many defeats of his armies by the English, in the reign of our Edward the Third, his competitor for the French crown, that none

but the person who bore the above-mentioned office in his court would venture to bring him any such kind of intelligence.

Lewis the Fourteenth, though not deficient in that courage of mind which bears ill fortune without desponding, yet had some tincture of the above weakness. When the battle of Blenheim had reduced his affairs to that unprosperous condition from which they never recovered, all his courtiers were silent, and only Madam De Maintenon, his wife, had the resolution to disclose the fatal event.

The tame and passive submission of the Germans to their princes is the more deserving of notice, as nothing is more repugnant to their natural inclinations than to make any sort of concessions. Unless restrained by prospects of interest or ambition,

tion, no people are less tolerant and more averse to put up with affronts and indignities, nor readier to take offence at the smallest provocations. Their resentment is oftentimes so unjustifiable, and even ridiculous, that their neighbours, the French, (who, to do them justice, are not overpatient when they think themselves insulted) have subjected this punctiliofness in asserting their honour to a proverbial derision of long standing. *Querelle d'Allemand*, a German quarrel, is an expression which has been used for many centuries, to signify a serious falling out for trifles.

The suppression of this restive, unpliant temper, is remarkable in the German armies, where a pacific subordination reigns between the upper and lower classes of officers, the more exemplary and surprising as the domineering spirit of the former is

often very galling and oppressive to their inferiors.

This may be considered as one of those many proofs that a German receives from nature, a command over his passions, which empowers him to stifle them, whenever his welfare requires their concealment, and indues him, at the same time, with a cool phlegmatic perseverance that enables him to keep his point steadily in view, and to give up those considerations which would make him deviate from the track; by persisting in which, he expects to succeed.

CHAP.

C H A P. X.

Constancy of the Germans in adhering to their primitive Professions—Good Effects resulting from it—Different Opinions entertained of the Germans, and of the French, by the People of Europe—General Probity and Candour of the Germans—Their Laboriousness and Economy—Happy Consequences of these Qualities—Concluding Reflections.

THE persevering disposition of the Germans is particularly visible in that adherence to their primitive pursuits and original callings, which, assisted by the habitual ingenuity resulting from continual application, effects the sure, however slow, progress, which they never fail to make in those undertakings, the success of which depends chiefly upon assiduity.

Their genius is like a rich, but coarse and tough soil, which demands a laborious cultivation. Their capacity lies too deep for a superficial degree of care and instruction to bring it forward to maturity. But when the requisite measure of attention and pain is bestowed, an ample harvest accrues to the possessor.

Hence they equal any, and exceed most nations in those intellectual acquisitions which length of time and obstinacy of toil are alone able to compass. Their proficiency in various languages is, for instance, extraordinary, and sometimes astonishing. An admirable competency of skill in three or four, and often a greater number, is an accomplishment far from unusual in Germany.

They make no less eminent a figure in those

those curious researches, a long continuance wherein will of course lead a prying and penetrative mind to discoveries. Long before either the English or the French had made any considerable progress in them, even so remotely as the fourteenth century, an age of general darkness, they applied themselves to enquiries into the secrets of nature, and cultivated that branch of study with more success than any other country in Europe.

In the present period of universal improvement, their inventive talents and dexterity in useful and ingenious fabrications still retain their primitive popularity, both in their own and in the adjacent countries.

Many of these owe the civilisation of their manners, and the establishment of the polite arts among them, to the Germans,

mans, whose example prescribes whatever relates to the customs and fashions throughout the north, with no less authority than France dictated, during a long space of time, in these articles, to the southern parts of Europe.

But there is a material difference between the opinion which the European nations entertain of the French, and that which they manifest in favour of the Germans: the latter, from the downrightness and candour of their disposition, meet with the most gracious acceptance of their services, and are often honoured with the most distinguished employments. In the northern kingdoms they have long been treated with the highest predilection. In Russia they were always received with peculiar distinction, and were remarkably instrumental in its civilization. The court and

and armies of the great Czar, Peter, were full of Germans. They abound in Sweden, Poland, and Denmark, especially the latter. Their long-approved attachment and fidelity to the governments in whose service they enter, by rendering them a valuable acquisition, are a powerful motive at the same time to secure them a favourable reception.

But the credit of the French, notwithstanding their abilities, is much inferior: the dread of that spirit of intrigue, and of the address in exerting it, which characterise them wherever they go, proves generally an insuperable bar to their advancement to any post of great trust in foreign countries. The influence they may obtain is usually possessed and exerted in secret. In spite of the natural vanity which actuates every Frenchman, and impels him to

make

make a parade of his power, they are ready enough to conceal it, when its manifestation would only tend to defeat their purposes. They are conscious of the general dissatisfaction with which foreigners behold the natives of France invested with authority over them, and enjoying the prince's favour. This averseness, they well know, proceeds from the fear of their meddling, restless disposition, and the apprehension of their exercising it to the disquiet of the public.

Hence it is, the character of the French is held in such universal suspicion in all the courts of Europe. However individuals may be taken with the pleasingness of their manners, still the knowledge how expert they are in using every kind of allurement for the purposes of political intrigue, operates against their dexterity with wonderful efficacy

efficacy in all men of shrewdness and penetration.

Individuals of this description are always therefore upon their guard against French machinations, and ready for that reason to set their faces against their admission to much credit with the governing powers. Herein they are certainly well warranted. The part borne by the French, in the internal commotions and disorders that have agitated divers European states, is too notorious to need insisting upon. Without stepping out of our own times, instances now might be adduced to justify the cautiousness with which they ought to be dealt with in all matters wherein the peace and safety of nations are concerned.

It is for these reasons that, with all their plausibility of speech and agreeableness of behaviour,

behaviour, they impose upon none but the weak-minded, fascinated by their exterior graces, and inattentive to the artfulness with which they cloak and carry on their designs.

The total and striking difference which marks the conduct and manners of the natives of Germany lays them open to no such mistrusts and apprehensions. The frankness that accompanies their actions, and the reputation of integrity which they justly possess, render it unnecessary to watch them with that jealousy, of which the well-known artifice of the French stands so much in need.

We may conclude these remarks on the Germans, with an observation, to which we are naturally led by the strong disparity subsisting between their character and that

of the French. This very diversity amounts to an unanswerable proof how solid and well-founded the maxim is, which teaches that plainness in our proceedings, and a practical abhorrence of artfulness and disguise, are the safest and readiest road to success, both in public and private life.

The fortunate effects of this honesty and openness of disposition are very visible and extensive among the commercial and industrious classes in Germany. The good faith that characterises them creates a reciprocal confidence which produces a facility and circulation of business that render it highly profitable wherever it is not fettered by the restraints of an oppressive government.

Hence the inhabitants of those towns and territories in Germany, that are governed by their own municipal laws, and

may

may be considered as possessed of constitutional freedom, are not only the most flourishing people in the empire, but little inferior in their prosperity to the freest and wealthiest states in Europe. Hamburg, for instance, all proportions considered, is exceeded by no place in commerce and opulence. The same assertion holds good respecting the generality of those that are styled free and imperial cities.

In the same manner, none of the numerous adventurers that repair to North America from so many quarters of Europe meet with more success than attends the generality of emigrants from Germany. Their national character of probity naturally procures them esteem. People are usually very ready to give them sufficient credit on that account; and they are as rarely wanting to repay the friendly treatment

ment

ment they receive, by the diligence with which they exert themselves in the prosecution of the business which they take in hand, and by the punctuality with which they satisfy the obligations they have severally contracted.

Besides candour in their dealings, and simplicity in their manners, the natives of Germany are equally noted for two other qualifications of essential importance in those classes of society which are to subsist by the toil of their hands, and the carefulness of their management. These are laboriousness and frugality; in which, though they may have rivals, they have certainly no superiors. These, if one may use such an expression, are the four cardinal virtues of the Germans; the more to be prized, as they are the basis of many others, and contribute to the substantial welfare of the

community, in a much higher degree than any other qualities, however brilliant in themselves, or soothing to the pride of those who possess them.

The laborious disposition, and the singular œconomy that characterise the common people in Germany, are peculiar subjects of notice to observing travellers. Notwithstanding the discouragements to which the lower classes are liable in many of the principalities of the empire, yet through an invariable steadiness and assiduity in their several callings, decency and sufficiency are the portion of the majority of those, whose equals in degree, in many other countries, through a defect of the same measure of toil and application, are so frequently reduced to wretchedness and want.

The vast continent already mentioned abounds with no less proofs of the incessant care and indefatigable pains with which the Germans attend to the improvement of the various branches of their property. The good husbandry of those who cultivate the fertile plains of Pennsylvania has rendered their condition as prosperous and thriving as that of any of the people who have settled in the Colonies, founded by the English in that part of the world.

It affords no inconsiderable pleasure to contemplative minds to behold such multitudes of deserving individuals snatched, as it were, from the hard fate to which they seemed destined by their birth, and transplanted by a more auspicious fortune to a country wherein they have an ample field to display their many meritorious qualifications,

cations, and to meet at the same time with an adequate recompence.

But, exclusive of the satisfaction resulting to humanity through the deliverance of such numbers from servitude and oppression, the felicity of these numerous fugitives from domestic misery holds up a lesson to princes, how much it behoves them to render their native homes comfortable to their subjects. It teaches them to compare the advantages a mild treatment of them is attended with, to the desolation of a country, the inhabitants of which are tyrannically used. It shews them what immense treasures accrue to a state by encouraging and facilitating the acquisition of riches among individuals, and how much mistaken those sovereigns are who think they cannot be too watchful in seizing every opportunity of intercepting and turning into

into their own private channel the profits arising to their people from the exercise of their industry.

Notwithstanding the malignity that some have too hastily and inconsiderately admitted to be inherent in our nature, on considering the propensity and alertness with which defamation and scandal are listened to and propagated, yet from the more visible complacency and delight that commonly appear, as much in them who hear, as in those who recount laudable transactions, it seems probable there is much more enjoyment resulting from the latter than from the former; a conjecture one may venture to countenance for the honour of humanity.

Induced by this agreeable presumption, we have expatiated the more largely, and with

with the more alacrity, on those parts of the character of the Germans that shew them in an amiable light. It were equally unjust and useless to insist minutely on the slight faults of a nation so esteemable for its far greater proportion of eminent qualities. In descriptions of this kind one should dwell chiefly on the enumeration of such things as may be remembered with pleasure, and contribute to the utility and edification of mankind. When virtues greatly preponderate, vices should almost be forgotten; and while we survey the failings next to inseparable from the condition of mortals, we should be cautious not to animadver too forcibly on mere foibles, lest our attention should be diminished to the splendor of solid deserts.

The public interest undoubtedly makes it sometimes necessary to expose the guilt,
and

and censure the flaws of a people in their national capacity : but the utmost impartiality and discretion should direct such an enquiry. In order to avoid falsehood and misrepresentation, the most unfeigned mildness and moderation ought to be our guides, and no tincture of exaggeration allowed.

According to the celestial precept, we should temper judgement with mercy, and, above all, be convinced, that slander is acceptable only to the malicious and narrow-hearted ; a class of readers whom it were surely a disgrace to please. To a feeling mind, the discovery of blemishes must be painful ; and to an enlarged understanding, the review of misdeeds can afford no matter of satisfaction.

It is a much more delightful task, when such pictures can be drawn as demand more light than shade, and require not co-

lours

lours of an offensive dye ; when charmed with the beauty and the propriety of his subject, the painter need not fear to display it fully to sight. Happy when such a metaphor is applicable to individuals ; but how much happier when, without violating truth, we are able to apply it to whole nations ?



F I N I S.

